GENERAL CONFERENCE– TORONTO, ONT.

The international general conference of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches is being held in Toronto, Ontario, this year. The conference will be from July 10th through the 17th. We are super excited about attending this conference. The team will be leaving Quincy with about ten people on board the bus. The Quincy church, which is also the team's offices pays for all the fuel and team's expenses in return for transportation to the conference and back. It is going to be a fantastic trip this year with many things planned for the group on the round trip to Toronto. Ron's mother will also be riding in the bus and joining in all the fun.

The new bus will be on display during the day on Friday at the conference location. There will be tours, visiting, and hopefully video tapes of services so that everyone who has never experienced the team can see a little of what the team is all about. Then on Friday evening the team will be performing for the evening service with the Rev. Elder Freda Smith bringing the sermon. There will be past team members present that many of you haven't seen for some time. Karen Barnes (Scooter) will be attending the conference and will be at the bus to visit with all of her friends. She traveled for three years on the old school buses and was the longest term member during the past seven years. She hopes to have plenty of time to visit with everyone that she hasn't seen for years. Annette Beale, who was one of the founders of the team in 1976, will also be attending the conference. Most of the team's board of directors will be there and many people from Quincy who have donated many hours at the offices to help reach thousands of people with this evangelistic ministry. We haven't confirmed any of the other past members as of yet, but I'm sure that there will be more attending the conference. And of course, you will get to meet Ron's mother who has been blessed and blessed by the Lord. Many of you have heard testimonies about her and now you can meet her in person.

It will be a fantastic time in the Lord with services each morning and evening. Workshops, business meetings, and much more makes the general conference the highlight of the two years between conferences. We challenge you to try to make it to any general conference where thousands of our family from all over the world join together to praise the Lord. SEE YA THERE!!!

New Freedom Evangelistic Team, Inc.

JULY–AUGUST, 1983

EVANGELITE

P.O. Box 1188, Quincy, IL 62306

Influence of Religion in American Life

(Evangelical Newsletter, 4-29-83)

The influence of religion in American life is becoming more personal, more important. *U.S. News & World Report* (April 4) devotes a "Special Report" to "Religion's New Turn: Search for the Sacred." The editors find evidence of religion's expanding impact. "Sensing a gnawing disillusionment with science and secularism as the thriving forces in U.S. society, churches are growing more aggressive in proclaiming the spirituality that is the root of their very existence." They cite Gallup Poll data substantiating growth in membership, attendance, and among those believing that religion is increasing its influence.

USN&WR recognizes that growth has not been even: "...only the conservative Prostestant churches list healthy gains." Among the top winners between 1972 and 1982 are the Southern Baptists (up 20 per cent, to 13,998,252) and the Assemblies of God (up 62 per cent, to 1,732,371); leading losers included the United Methodist Church (down ten per cent, to 9,584,711) and the United Presbyterian Church (down 21 per cent, to 2,423,601); the data are derived from the Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches. These trends have not gone unnoticed: "While congregations have by no means turned their backs on social issues—particularly the nuclear-weapons debate—there is a widespread feeling that churches must appeal more to people's thirst for understanding and support in an often difficult world...a growing number of liberal churches have learned some lessons from these successful conservative churches and are seeking to attract worshipers with a more personal brand of religion." *USN&WR* notes some of the factors in declining mainline church membership: the low birth rate, their roots in the declining areas of the northeast and midwest, lack of evangelism, continuing battles over politics and social activism.

Changes are also obvious among Roman Catholics, primarily in the enlarged role for lay leadership. "No longer content to follow meekly behind bishops and priests, men and women of the laity are seeking - and getting - leadership spots in nearly every phase of the church's life...Much of this was virtually unheard of a generation ago when, as Catholics used to lament, lay people were locked in a routine of 'pray, pay and obey.'" This trend is all the more important, in light of the expected continuing decline in the number of priests.

The survey also looks at Jews in the U.S., finding a new pride and sense of identity among these people. Also evident is a trend to small group study and interaction.

Religious leaders—at least those consulted by *USN&WR*—see the growth in Eastern religions in the U.S. as a result of their meeting several desires: "To escape modern pressures, to experience intimacy in groups that stand apart from the ordinary world, to search for inner peace."

Robert Schuller Wins Top Rank In Audience Survey

(*Evangelical Newsletter,* April 15, 1983)

Robert Schuller, pastor of California's Garden Grove Community Church, is the most-watched religious television show in the nation, according to new Arbitron figures on the syndicated "Hour of Power." With an audience of 2,667,000, the Schuller program nosed out second-place Jimmy Swaggert's program with 2,653,000 viewers. Oral Roberts placed third in the same poll with 2.4 million viewers. Rex Humbard was fourth with 1.8 million viewers, and fifth was Jerry Falwell with 1.4 million viewers.

AIDS: a physical enemy of the church

a continuing series by Evangelist Ron J. Anderson

"Mystifying acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) is spreading with frightening speed." This is what the headline announced the *Kansas City Star*, April 14, 1983. It went on explaining many facts about this disease that has frightened so many people in the last few months. There are a number of questions answered in the article: "CAUSE: unknown; virus suspected—WHO GETS IT: sexually active homosexual men, drug users, Haitians, hemophiliacs, and sex partners and children of people in these groups—SYMPTOMS: starts with long, unexplained generalized illness: fever, weight loss, enlarged lymph glands. Lab tests show immune system defects. No single accepted test for diagnosis.—RESULTS: prey to deadly infectous diseases and cancer.—TREATMENT: therapy for complications; as yet no way to repair damaged immune system. Experimental treatment being tried.—FATALITY RATE: nearly 40 percent to date, with worsening death rate over time.—NUMBERS: as of April 7, 1,300 cases and 489 deaths. Now up to four reports per day.—LOCATIONS° cases in 35 states and the District of Columbia and 15 foregin countries. Eighty-three percent of the cases are in New York, California, New Jersey and Florida...'This disease already has claimed more lives than toxic shock syndrome and Legionnaries' disease combined,' said Dr. Elaine Wallace, a Kansas City osteopath and general practitioner. 'We're talking about a serious situation.' "

In 1981 there were 218 cases with 160 deaths which jumped to 780 more cases with 248 deaths during 1982. In the first three months of this year there have been 241 new cases with 33 deaths. We, the team, have been on the West Coast during the past couple months and we have become more aware of this deadly disease. I am writing this first article of a series in an effort to share this awareness with all of you. I will cover some facts and figures, but most of all I hope to challenge all of you to pray and put those prayers to work with faith in action. We have had a number of people die during the time that we have been in their city. It started in Tucson, AZ, where a young man died during the week of renewal. His name was not released by request of the relatives, but it made the whole situation a little closer to home. Then, a number of people died during our renewals in California, including a member of a local MCC who was very well known. His twin brother had died of AIDS just a week prior. Now, there are members and friends of MCC that have either contracted AIDS or died of it within the past few months. Many more are expected to contract this disease which brings this terror much closer to many of us. Many churches have encouraged their members to cease kissing and simply hug or shake hands during services.

Serious? You bet! There are already many misconceptions about AIDS. One, is that only homosexual men catch it. According to records 72 percent are homosexuals and 28 percent of the victims are not. Another misconception is the mystery around the causes. The San Francisco police department has even started wearing gloves and masks while dealing with the "gay" community, because of many misconceptions.

I would like to share a part of an editorial that appeared in the *BLUEBOY* magazine before AIDS made its appearance. The article is written by David Rothenberg and was reprinted as it originally appeared in the *New York News*.

> **"Gay men are going to have to begin to ask some serious questions about their life choices.**
>
> **We are a community besieged. There is Kaposi's Sarcoma, amebiasis, hepatitis, herpes, gonorrhea, syphillis and a multitude of undefined sexually transmitted diseases. The number of deaths of gay men in the last few months have been staggering.**
>
> **We have had public rallies to protest against the random street violence inflicted on us. The death toll from disease is probably 100 times greater than that resutling from street combat. I am not minimizing the importance of confronting that irrational violence...but I am concerned that many gay men refuse to allow for a dialogue about our health standards.**
>
> **The simple fact is that the backroom, bathhouse, movie theatre, meat-rack, sexual multiplicity might wipe us out. I am not commenting on sexual morality. I am talking about the reality of our lives and deaths.**
>
> **I repeat that I am concerned about our health. I attended one funeral service. I learned of the death of another gay man know. I have friends in total depression because of the state of their health. Those not yet touched act as if they have a natural immunity. I have seen the careless and bored suddenly become infected. Usually they are in a state of rage that they were not warned, though the gay press (unread by most gay men) has been sending out information for over a year.**
>
> **I am also selfish. I am not yet ready to surrender a healthy sexual appetite. But I can't walk into those dens of diseases and not be concerned about the consequences. Likealmost every gay male of my acquaintance, I have been medically checked two or three times in the last few years. I am concerned about the future affects of horrendous antibiotics. I am worried about my nervous sytem and the unknowns from drugs about which I have little knowledge."**

The article ends with three paragraphs that are very eye opening. This article is written by a member of the community at large and not a MCCer.

> **"What are the choices? We are going to have to make them. We have to be willing to reduce group and anonymous sex. We're going to have to put the lights back on. We have to be willing to surrender that male syndrome of using sex as affirmation.**
>
> **We might have to return to the hand-holding Saturday night date and, God help us, the relationship. We might have to begin to get to know the people with whom we are sleeping and having sexual encounters.**
>
> **These will not be choices made out of some vague morality with an Old Testament lineage. These will have to be options made by people, liverated enough, sufficiently self-loving, to decide that their bodies and minds are worth preserving."**

If people of the community at large can stand up and say this, why aren't we as churches made up of Christian brothers and sisters standing up and shouting the message? Especially now that AIDS has come onto the scene! What about the promiscuity, so called "Free Sex", open relationships, baths, bookstores, and more? What about health, morality, ethics, unity of faith, freedom, life more abundantly, commitments, respect, and many other statements of which we have not taken firm stands? Yet, the scriptures have warned us for thousands of years concerning all of these items. I hope to cover these in future articles along with updates about AIDS. It is no longer a question of what is moral or not, but a question of life and death!

Bus "Pay Off" Update

The "Freedom Bus", or for short "Freeda", has had all the work done on it except for the brakes and "weigh-balancing" which will be done this coming year. Many of you have been able to see the bus and you know how much better it is than the school buses that the team has lived in during the previous years. The bus is not only excellent living conditions, but has made traveling much easier and less expensive. The school buses got 3.7 mpg (gas) whereas the new bus gets 8.2 mpg (diesel). The life expectancy for a school bus is 200,000 miles whereas the life expectancy of the new bus is four million miles. The bus originally had 875,000 miles on it and the team has already put another 35,000 miles on during the past year and three months. The corporation orignally paid $28,000 for the bus, with $10,000 of that amount being a 2½ year loan. The conversion cost was $10,000 and mechanical repairs have been $7,000 which comes to a grand total of $45,000. There was a loan made for part of the mechanical repairs and monthly payments of $166.75 are being made out of the team's regular budget. The bus is now valued at $80,000 on the market. The only amount owed on the bus, besides the monthly payments on repairs, and the team's only major debt for seven years is the $10,000 loan with interest which comes to the total of $13,500.

A few months ago we started a "pay off" campaign which is to have 135 people pledge $10 per month for 10 months. There have been 76 people that have joined in and made this kind of pledge. This is a large "balloon" payment coming up in 1984, but when it is broken down to $10 per month it becomes a very simple thing. This has given everyone a chance to be a big part of this ministry, because everyone can afford to donate $10 per month and reap many blessings by being a part of this ministry. One show flake on top of a mountain can't even be seen. But, when many snow flakes gather, then it can be seen for miles and makes a beautiful snow-capped mountain. This is the same kind of thing that happens when everyone joins together in the one priority of this ministry and that is to reach as many people as possible with the Gospel of Jesus Christ! There is only two months left before the ten month deadline when the payment is due. There are still 59 people needed to bring this total miracle to a conclusion.

All you have to do is fill out the form in this *Evangelite*, mail it in to the team's address, and then you will receive a "reminder note" at the first of every month. We will also send you a model of "Freeda" so you will always be reminded that you are a big part of this evangelistic ministry. There have been some churches that have joined in with the team and they send $10 a month to help the team to keep the bus for this outreach. Some people have pledged as couples and church groups or other organizations can make it a joint effort, also. All contributions are tax deductible and you will receive a receipt for tax purposes at the end of the year, upon request.

Won't you join in with all the rest of us who want this ministry to continue to be a testimony of God's love and how God answers prayer for all of us. Renewals continue to reach thousands and when Phase II begins this coming year we all will be able to reach many times more people than ever before. We know that God will bless you many times over for your prayers, support and for being a part of this missionary-evangelistic outreach.

1983 Freedom Bus
PAYOFF PLEDGE

I pledge $10.00 per month for ten months to help pay off the mortgage on the Silver Eagle bus. I understand that I can turn in more than one pledge. I also understand that this pledge will be spent for nothing else, but will be added to the needed 135 pledges in order to pay off the $13,500 needed.

Name .....

Address .....

City..... State .....Zip .....

Please send me more pledge cards so I may contact others that might want to help. (circle)

1983 PRAYER REQUESTS

.....

.....

.....

.....

The truth shall make you free

A fundamental interpretation of scripture regarding homosexuality

by Evangelist Ron J. Anderson

only $3 (plus 75 cents postage and handling)

MAIL TO: New Freedom Press 802½ Maine Quincy, IL 62301

FAMILY HAPPENINGS

GLENDALE, CA—MCC

The team went to Disneyland on Monday and thoroughly enjoyed playing for a day. Then off to Glendale to start services on Wednesday evening. The bus was parked at the church which is beautiful. The church building, social hall with offices, and the parsonage are all on the same property.

George Covington, the pastor, and Earl his spouse, are long time friends of Ron's. They knew each other years ago when George and Earl lived in St. Louis. Back then they had shared together in renewals when George was the pastor in Ft. Myers, Florida. So, it was a reunion for Ron and his friends. It was neat to be able to be so close for the week and visit everyday.

The services started out on Wednesday evening with many blessings and rejoicing. Divine Redeemer MCC is one of the largest attended "study groups" that the team has been to. The sanctuary was filled each night with vibrant people who are so loving. Many first time visitors attended along with visitors from other MCC's in the area. Carol and Ron practiced music every day for hours, and on Saturday night Jerry joined in and sang with the group during singspiration and two specials. Jerry had been practicing for months in order to sing with the group and this was truly his debut. The church and team were also blessed during Saturday night concert by Linda. Linda is a black woman from the LA area and what a beautiful soprano voice! She sang "His Eye is on the Sparrow" and brought the house down when she hit the last few notes that were so high that everyone thought she had gone through the ceiling of the church. Wow! What an angelic voice! She then joined in with Carol and Ron to sing "What a Beautiful Day for the Lord to Come Again." Linda is blind and has a guide dog by the name of Tonya, who attended the entire service and enjoyed the music also. Linda is applying for the team through the board of directors in Quincy and I'm sure that some of you will hear her sing sometime in the future. Rev. Willie Smith from the West Hollywood MCC also sang a special and led a testimony service that blessed everyone present. He was one of the original twelve at the first service of MCC and has become very well known for his musical talents.

The week was fantastic with many new commitments and healings in mind, body and soul. This is truly one of the most loving and alive churches and we know that God will continue to bless them as they work in the harvest field of souls. Praise God for Divine Redeemer MCC and please know that the team appreciates all of your love and support!

Schedule of Renewals

July 4-Aug. 10 .....General Conference and Summer Break
Sept. 1 — Dec. 31
Renewals are being scheduled and will be announced in upcoming *Evangelites*.

SANTA BARBARA, CA—MCC

It is the first time for the team to be in Santa Barbara and they were so excited about meeting everyone for the first time. The MCC shares a beautiful building with a local church and the team enjoyed the first evening getting to know Rev. Frank Murr, their pastor.

The first service on Wednesday was way below all the expectations. There were six people in attendance and it seemed that a cloud hung over the entire service. The second night there were only three in attendance and everyone was wondering what was wrong. The offerings had been very low, but the spirit of the pastor and the team was still high. It seemed that the small group expected a miracle and prayed that renewal would truly break.

Praise the Lord! It happened! Friday night was exciting with hand clapping, singing and a new refreshing evergy was in the service. Saturday night's concert was fantastic with people laughing, shouting, crying, and everyone knew that God was pouring out the spirit of renewal in the church. Sunday service was exceptional. One would think that the people would have to be pulled down off the ceiling because of the joy and excitement. Everyone was praising the Lord for the beautiful spirit and the many blessings that were taking place. Praise the Lord! The team's budget was met, but there was even a greater miracle. The offering for the church was the largest in history. It was a whopping $1,400.00 and the week turned out to be a week of miracles.

There was a very special person in the congregation that we want to testify to you about. Her name is Dr. Stiffler and she is 88 years of age. She used to work with Amy Sempel McPherson many years ago. What a woman! Dr. Stiffler was such a blessing to the team with her teaching ministry. It was a joy and an inspiration to listen to her many testimonies of faith in Jesus Christ. The team adopted her and she fell in love with the team. She was truly a "star" in the team's life and ministry.

The blessing of renewal was so obvious in Santa Barbara and the week turned out to be a high point during the California tour. We all praise God for the loving brothers and sisters in the Santa Barbara MCC. Please keep them in your prayers as they go forward with a never ending renewal.

NEW FREEDOM
Evangelistic Team, Inc.
P.O. Box 1188, Quincy, IL 62306

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DANCE, "GAY CUBAN RELIEF" DANCE, DANCE, DANCE!

UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES

When: Aug. 16, 1980

Where: 4949 Foothill Rd., Ventura

Time: 8:00 pm.

Why? ALL PROCEEDS GO TO OUR GAY SISTERS & BROTHERS WHO ARE BEING KEPT IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS HERE IN THE STATES... COME AND JOIN US, DANCE AND HAVE FUN FOR A GOOD CAUSE!

Beer - $.75
Wine - $.75
Sodas - $.50

Tickets -- $3.00

at door...

or call- 485-9994

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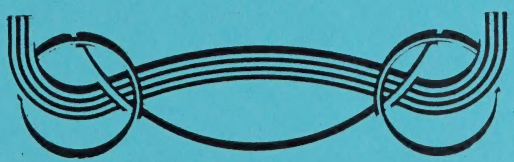

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at door...

or call - 485-9994

GAY RAP GROUP

AN EIGHT WEEK SERIES
HOMOSEXUALITY: RULES, ROLES, & RELATIONSHIPS

JUL. 20 COMING OUT

JUL. 27 WHO DO YOU TELL?

AUG. 3 GAY IN THE WORKPLACE

AUG. 10 ROLEPLAYING

AUG. 17 MONOGAMY vs OPEN RELATIONSHIPS

AUG. 24 PRIVATE LIVES - PUBLIC PLACES

AUG. 31 GAY & GRAY

SEPT. 7 HOMOPHOBIA

Metropolitan Community Church

Beginning July 20, 1980 **8:30pm**

4949 Foothill Rd. **Ventura, Ca.**

Call 485-9994 for directions **Donation - $2.00**

DANCE, "GAY CUBAN RELIEF" DANCE, DANCE!

When: Aug. 16, 1980

Where: 4949 Foothill Rd., Ventura

Time: 8:00 pm.

Why? ALL PROCEEDS GO TO OUR GAY SISTERS & BROTHERS WHO ARE BEING KEPT IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS HERE IN THE STATES... COME AND JOIN US, DANCE AND HAVE FUN FOR A GOOD CAUSE!

Beer - $.75
Wine - $.75
Sodas - $.50

Tickets -- $3.00

at door...

or call - 485-9994

Rev. Ragona

Concentration camps, Prisons! Indeed! Your ignorance + bias against our government is disgusting. I suppose you'd argue that the rioters at Indian Town Gap were "rising against their oppressors". So noble!

Americans + their government are doing more than any people on earth + you smear them with your snide innuendos about concentration camps + prisons. Have you no sense of proportion, no sense of honesty?

You had the nerve to say I was hostile but your own hostility is oozing out all over. You can represent the church in Washington + Canada when it is ego gratifying but when a parishioner has a complaint, he's hostile. Very convenient!

JB Eilly

Sunday Services-6:30 pm

Metropolitan Community Church

OF VENTURA

Rev. Marge Ragona, Pastor
Mailing Address:
Box A-0
Ventura, Ca. 93001
805-485-9994

Vol. 1 No. 5 August 1, 1980

Dear Friends:

If our format seems a little new to you, it's because we feel we're growing up and can begin to do things a little more formally and professionally. We now have a printer with the church, who has made our lives easier and been of wonderful help to us. He's Blake Yri, who wears still another hat on Sunday. Blake was an exhorter with MCC Seattle and is an exhorter-candidate with us now. We have appreciated his help in the services and are enjoying the new hymnals he printed for us last week.

To bring you up to date on what's been going on,we need to start with who is currently "minding the store." In addition to the pastor and exhorter candidate, we also have a deacon-candidate, Randy, who is doing really helpful things in the way of setting up and dismantling the altar, arranging the sanctuary, and seeing to it that people have hymnals and bulletins. He will be having charge of the Deacon's Locker -- food and clothing for emergencies. (You'll see why those will be needed later.) He'll be on hand to help meet real life needs of people. We also have three board members (and will be expanding the board to five at our congregational meeting in November.) Tom is our Treasurer, Jean is Church Clerk, and Kim is board member. This gives us a well-functioning core group who can be counted on to see that things work.

Our attendance has been growing. Two weeks ago we had 18, last Sunday 17 present and one day about a month ago we had 20. We've laughed and joked about being able to make a tiny prayer circle with our arms around each other's waists, but suddenly we're a fair-sized circle and beginning to see that what we've been doing is bringing us new members and friends, and keeping people who have come involved.

What have we been doing? Mostly, we've been letting the church be the church. By that I mean that we have met to worship and really shared the word of our God with each other. We have sung and been joyful and tried to really be a community where people could feel at home and know that they were loved.

It is my belief that the church has three main tasks, and the New Testament describes these as kerygma, koinonia, and diakonia. Kerygma is the preaching of the word. It is sharing our faith with each other, teaching, and telling the Good News of Jesus Christ to all people. Koinonia is being community or family for each other. It is also the root wor from which communion comes -- and that means that as we share the eucharist or communion or Lord's Supper together, we not only remember the Christ who died for us, but remember that we live for each other. Diakonia is the way we live out that caring for each other. It is being of service to people, meeting needs, and taking care of the temporal (life situation) needs of people.

That bring us to a project which is very dear to us these days. We voted, as a church last week meeting in emergency session, to ask the Fellowship to permit us to sponsor two Cuban gay refugees -- hopefully a couple. They will be housed with a church member temporarily, clothing will be collected for them (in appropriate sizes and of types that will help them fit into the community readily, and appropriate to the jobs we hope to help them find.) We have a promise from a church friend of the possibility of work for them, and are planning a "pounding" when they are secure enough to have their own housing arrangements. (A "pounding" is an old New England term for a grocery basket -- a pound of flour, a pound of macaroni, a pound of butter, etc. to help people get settled in a new home.)

An old friend of mine back at Providence used to say, "Don't keep the faith, give it away!" We are hoping to share our faith and God's goodness to us by giving some of it away to two Cuban friends who have had to flee their homes.

We are also HAVING A DANCE! We want a whole lot of you to come and enjoy our dance, which will be Saturday evening, August 16th at our host church, 4949 Foothill Road. The cost will be $3.00 and there will be beer and wine and canned sodas for sale, along with refreshments that will help you to enjoy yourself. There will be disco music, and some slow music, and just good dance music, so that you can take off your shoes and "boogie." The admission cost is $3.00 -- and every cent over the rent of the church and the cost of the drinks will go to the Fellowship Gay Cuban Refugee Fund. We have pledged (with MCC Santa Barbara) to raise $1,000. This way, we can raise money and have fun while we do it. Come and enjoy -- and know that the money you are contributing is going to help a gay brother or sister to get out of a concentration camp.

Some of you were previously involved with MCC Ventura -- and remember both the good times and the bad ones that happened. Many of you haven't come back because the bad times were so bad they outweighed the good. Those who stayed and those who have become part of our family in the last year are learning that the good times are coming back, and it's been worth it,after all, to have hung in there.

At our recent Board meeting, we were able to raise Rev. Ragona's stipend to $15.00 a week (to include a gasoline allowance) and to give her $50.00 for a housing allowance. It's not a fortune, but with the $87.50 that covers her insurance, we are now paying our pastor a total package of $200.00 a month. Rev. Ragona has worked for 10 months for $10.00 a week and her insurance, and it is good to know that our bills

are in good enough order for us to be able to offer her a little more inducement to minister in this community.

You see, we are making headway -- not so fast that we can't get to know our new people, but steadily and surely.

If you haven't been to MCC Ventura lately, why not come by and meet the new people who are attending, renew old acquaintances, say "hello" to friends you haven't seen for a while -- and get the feel of the way it is now. We think you'll notice the difference and be glad you came.

Rev. Marge

DATES TO REMEMBER

1. DISTRICT RETREAT: September 21 and 22 -- Girl Scout Camp at Griffith's Park, Los Angeles.

2. EXCEL - September 26-28th. 3. MARANATHA - October (in planning).

4. DANCE FOR GAY CUBAN REFUGEE FUND - AUGUST 16th - SATURDAY, 8-12 p.m.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

COMPASSION

There is an old Indian story of the Holy Man who was walking through the countryside where there had been a flood, and he spied a scorpion clinging to a log and about to be thrown off by the rushing water. The holy man immediately climbed out on the log and reached for the scorpion. As he did so the scorpion stung him. He pulled back, just long enough to stop the bleeding of his hand a little, then reached for the scorpion again. The scorpion stung him again. He still would not desist, and kept reaching for the scorpion, and of course, each time the scorpion would sting him until his hand was swollen and raw.

Another traveler passing by stopped to watch and finally called out to the Holy Man, "Don't you understand that each time you reach for him, the scorpion will sting you -- that's the nature of the scorpion." The Holy Man called back, "I understand that it's the nature of the scorpion to sting, but it is my nature to be compassionate. I do not ask him to change, don't ask me to given up what is natural to me."

We understand that people are not always grateful for what is done for them -- but as Christians, we would be untrue to our own natures if we did not try to help.

That's what the Scripture means when it says, "Be ye compassionate, as your Parent in heaven is compassionate." And it means, too, that God does not stop being compassionate when we "foul up." It means that God -- being true to God's nature -- continues to reach for us, even when we hurt God by our disobedience. Our God is, indeed, a God of love and compassion, and a God who continually reaches out to save us from the effects of our own rebellion.

are in good enough order for us to be able to offer her a little more
inducement to minister in this community.

You see, we are making headway -- not so fast that we can't get
to know our new people, but steadily and surely.

If you haven't been to MCC Ventura lately, why not come by and
meet the new people who are attending, renew old acquaintances, say
"hello" to friends you haven't seen for a while -- and get the feel
of the way it is now. We think you'll notice the difference and be
glad you came.

Rev. Mary

DATES TO REMEMBER:

1. DISTRICT RETREAT: September 21 and 22 -- Girl Scout Camp at Griffith's Park, Los Angeles.

2. EXCOM. - September 26-28th. 3. MARANATHA - October (in planning).

4. DANCE FOR GAY CUBAN REFUGEE FUND - AUGUST 16th - SATURDAY, 9-12 p.m.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

CONVERSION

There is an old Indian story of the Holy Man who was walking through the countryside where there had been a flood, and he spied a scorpion clinging to a log and about to be thrown off by the rushing water. The holy man immediately climbed out on the log and reached for the scorpion. As he did so the scorpion stung him. He pulled back, just long enough to stop the bleeding of his hand a little, then reached for the scorpion again. The scorpion stung him again. He still would not desist, and kept reaching for the scorpion, and of course, each time the scorpion would sting him,until his hand was swollen and raw.

Another traveler passing by stopped to watch and finally called out to the Holy Man, "Don't you understand that each time you reach for him, the scorpion will sting you -- that's the nature of the scorpion." The Holy Man called back, "I understand that it's the nature of the scorpion to sting, but it is my nature to be compassionate. I do not ask him to change, don't ask me to given up what is natural to me."

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10/21/81

Dear Marge -

I justed wanted to include a personal note. Fred and I are really enjoying California. He started work a week ago in Oxnard. I'm looking for part time work too. Bill Strickland and his sisters put us up for 2 weeks - and we are just finishing up 2 weeks housesitting for Kathleen and Karla - then back over to Stricklands'. Looks like it will be December before we get our own place.

Yeck! We've been gypsies since July 1 and having no roots - and everything in storage - is driving us buggy!

The people have been very loving and supportive - as you promised. All in all I feel it was the right move for us.

Sorry about this blasted phone bill mess. I think part of the problem was that when

Tim got back from Houston, their total attention was diverted to moving us out here and his contact with you about the bill at Houston was literally overlooked. This most recent delay in getting it to you is my fault - with Kathleen away - getting the bill, having Paul annotate it - even getting it duplicated. It's been like moving in cement. C'est la vie!

Well enough of that. Know that you are loved here. My prayers are with you!

Love,

Frank

Ventura NCC

J.B. Coilly
106 Anacopa Dr.
Camarillo, CA 93010

Manuel Antonio Santana

22-772 906

805-482 5405

UFMCC CUBAN RELIEF FUND

5300 Santa Monica Boulevard
Suite 304
Los Angeles, California 90029
(213) 464-5100

STAFF:
Rev. Bob Arthur - Director
Dale Leeche - Facilitator
John Donnelly - Co-facilitator

September 3, 1980

Dear Pastor:

Enclosed you will find copies of the names, addresses, and phone numbers of those people near your church who have sponsored a gay Cuban refugee through our office, along with the name and alien number of that refugee. If you have a screening committee working with sponsors, you are probably already aware of the sponsor information, but need to know the names of the refugees assigned. In some of these cases, the refugees have not yet arrived in your area, but should within a couple of weeks. We also realize that some changes may have been made on a local level between sponsors, or by the camp directly with the sponsors. If you are aware of such changes, we would appreciate notification, so that we may update our records. Also, in some cases you may find the same refugee assigned to more than one sponsor. That is because of a change in sponsorship at the last minute, and we have not had the chance yet to update our records. This list is just a statement of the situation as we are aware of it at the moment. You will be receiving from time to time a list of updates as we become aware of them. They will just be put into an envelope without any cover letter, and sent directly to you. If you have questions at any time, feel free to call upon us; but be aware of the tremendous backlog of phone calls we are constantly dealing with here, and be prepared for a delay in returning your phone calls.

Within the next week, you should receive a copy of a letter we are sending to every sponsor. In it we suggest they check with you for any information on a local level as to what services you may be providing or aware of as available in your community for sponsors and their refugees.

We are still in great need of sponsors and money. Anything you can do to help us find both would be greatly appreciated. Thank you all for the great response you have provided with us in this refugee situation. It is being recognized nation-wide as a great response and work, and it could not have happened without your support and help.

In Christ,

Bob

Rev. Bob Arthur
Director

HELP TO SUPPORT VENTURA COUNTY GAY BROTHERS AND SISTERS
WHILE TREATING YOURSELF TO A FUN NIGHT OUT!

Halloween Costume

DANCE

TOTAL PROCEEDS
TO BE SHARED EQUALLY BY

NORTON SOUND 8 LEGAL DEFENSE FUND (ACLU)
AND
SANTA BARBARA GAY RESOURCES SERVICE CENTER

NOVEMBER 1, 1980

8 - 12 PM

4949 FOOTHILL ROAD
VENTURA

$3 DONATION PER PERSON
(TAX DEDUCTIBLE)

BEER, WINE, SOFT DRINKS
AVAILABLE AT REASONABLE
PRICES

___I cannot attend, but here is my tax deductible donation of

___$5 ___$10 ___$20 ___$25 ___$50 ___Other_____

Name_____

Address_____

City_____

State_____Zip_____Phone_____

MAIL TO:

Metropolitan Community Church
PO Box A-O
Ventura, California 93002
(805) 485-9994

HELP TO SUPPORT VENTURA COUNTY GAY BROTHERS AND SISTERS
WHILE TREATING YOURSELF TO A FUN NIGHT OUT!

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MAIL TO:

Metropolitan Community Church
PO Box A-O
Ventura, California 93002
(805) 485-9994

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH OF VENTURA
P.O. Box 866
(805) 644-3898
Ventura, CA 93001

9/26/80

To: Marge Ragona
Metropolitan Community Church

Dear Marge:

Please let me introduce myself--I'm Judith Underhill, Finance Director (board member) of the Unitarian Church, and I shall be filling in as church secretary for two months or so. I will be in the office Monday mornings and Thursday afternoons starting October 6.

I received my office "orientation" from Sandie Moore today, and in the course of speaking with Jean Herian, our director of building and grounds, and Steve Reading, our caretaker, I have been filled in on the flap that has occurred concerning your church's new altar. Jean will be away for a short time, and I have been empowered to communicate with you about the problems created by the altar , to get the ball rolling toward finding a solution that will hopefully please as many as possible!

First of all, how fortunate you are to be the recipient of such a handsome and loving gift! I certainly hope it will assist you and your congregation in experiencing great joy in your worship services.

Unfortunately, it is large--that means it takes up precious room that other groups, particularly our church, desparately need to accommodate their larger numbers. Also, it is going to take a beating being moved around out of the way, and we do not want to be held responsible for damage to your altar! Finally--it is heavy. I personally helped to move it into the entry way today to make room for our Sunday service, and frankly, I hurt myself!! I am listing these problems so your congregation may have a rational, non-hurt, non-rejected-feeling understanding of our objections to the altar's being left in the meeting room. We love it, we admire the generosity of your congregation---but it is causing real problems that need to be dealt with!!

For the time being, space has been created in our entry way for temporary storage of the altar. This must not be considered a permanent solution! It does interfere with the use of our entry way and causes our "greeting room" to look crowded and awkward. In a spirit of compassion and understanding, however, we want you to feel free to store the altar there until an acceptable solution is found. Perhaps after emotions have cooled down somewhat, clear thinking can lead to a really sound final solution. Let me share with you some thoughts that have come up amongst us that we share with you in the hope it will spark your own creative processes toward finding an answer:

1. The garage area is not thought to be a good idea. (a) We are concerned about your safety in hefting a heavy item around outside in the dark; the driveway is not paved and

being horsed around outside might damage the altar; the garage doors have not yet been repaired and are difficult and/or dangerous to open at the present time; once the garage doors are fixed, we do have other commitments for that space (our street fair booth) that make us reluctant to allow others to come in and out of the garage in the dark (like our expensive fiberglas roof that might get squashed by unwary feet!!); that your people might be too tired or might forget to lug the altar out, or will get so fed up with the hassle that you will lose your good feeling about the altar. In short, we don't encourage you to look to this as a solution.

2. Please ask your clever carpenter/creator to have an open mind about modifying the dimensions of the altar--did you know that by re-making the altar just 2 inches in lenghth and approximately 10 inches in depth, it will fit like a glove into your closet? I've measured and examined it carefully and it could be done. It would be a lot of work for the carpenter, who might not feel happy about taking the altar apart and modifying, but your altar would have a safe and secure storage space, easy and quick to get to, that doesn't involve taking any space away from anything else, that provides you with the best security as far as tampering and damage-from-moving is concerned, etc. We will move things around so you have adequate storage space for your other belongings. It could be done!

3. Another thought--also involving modifying the altar--could you re-make the altar so that it comes apart?? That opens up a few more avenues as far as storage is concerned.

4. We are quite willing to allow you to store the altar on the front porch, although outside storage is not the best idea in the world because of possible weather damage.

5. ????

Please be assured that we want you to find the best solution for your needs, within the framework of our needs, and we would not want to see this problem become a divisive issue between us and you, or among yourselves. Perspective is needed!! Why not use the entry way for storage for a couple of weeks and let feelings simmer down, and then get down to the business of solving the problem, so you have the altar in its "final" storage space sometime after Thanksgiving??? On the other hand, please don't put the solution off until then--use this generous time frame to get a good solution! If you have any questions, thoughts, feelings, etc., you wish to share, please contact me at the church office, or at home at 646-3692.

Cordially,

Judith Underhill

Judith Underhill

UNITARIAN CHURCH of VENTURA

a fellowship of religious liberals

4949 FOOTHILL ROAD P. O. BOX 866

VENTURA, CALIFORNIA 93001

Rev. Jim Dace, Minister (part-time) 644-3898

Dear MCC:

On Sunday night May 4th our church is going to hold its Annual Congregational Meeting. This is traditionally held on a Sunday evening. Therefore we must ask you to re-schedule your service either to an afternoon in the main room or to other place for this day only.

I am sorry that this will inconvience you.

Yours truly,

Terry Brenner

10 INS MCC

To The MCC

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH of BOSTON
131 CAMBRIDGE STREET
BOSTON, MA 02114
REV. MARGE RAGONA, PASTOR
(617) 523-7664

October 8, 1981

Dear Members of the Board of Directors
Metropolitan Community Church of Ventura

I received a telephone call from the Treasurer of MCC Boston and later a copy of a letter you had written him regarding a telephone bill and other moneys "owed" to M.C.C. Ventura.

I am very distressed at the tone of the letter, and at the lack of communication prior to this letter having been sent to the Vestry of M.C.C. Boston.

I have asked that the phone bill(s) in question be sent to me so that I can see which calls belong to me, which belong to other church members (3), and possibly which may belong to M.C.C. Boston, as well as those which legitimately belong to Ventura.

That letter also contained a statement of a "large debt" owed personally to a church member. As you will recall, Karla Schultz left her bicycle for my daughter's use when Karla was stationed in Antarctica. The bicycle was stolen from the Oxnard High School yard (locked area). My daughter had agreed to reimburse Karla as she was able, and this seemed agreeable with Karla at the time. Had we been notified of an urgent need for the money, Missy and I would have made some arrangement to begin immediate payment to Karla. The first such payment is enclosed.

I remind MCC Ventura that when I came to them as Worship Coordinator I received no salary at all for the first three months, merely reimbursement for my travel cost from L.A. to Ventura ($10.00 weekly) as a favor to them in light of their very insecure financial situation at that time. I still continued to receive a very small salary from them for many months, until their debt of $900.00 was repaid to their previous pastor. I have <u>never</u> in any way taken advantage of my position as their pastor to incur indebtedness in their name, and as a matter of fact spent very little of the church's money for other than absolute necessities. I have often covered out-of-pocket expenses personally when the treasury was low and not asked for reimbursement. You will remember that even at the end of my stay, my salary was still very low and I received only a small amount of my rent toward an apartment which was used very often for church gatherings, meetings, etc.

I regret the phone bill having been left behind, but had you sent it to me long before this, I would have been more than glad to pay my portion of it.

My regard for you is still high, and I hope your relationship with your new pastor is rewarding for both of you.

I am taking the opportunity to send this letter, along with the letter from your Board of Directors to the District Coordinator, so that he is aware of this situation. I am also sending a copy of this letter to my treasurer, and to Rev. Scott.

I hope that this matter will be amicably settled to all of our satisfaction fairly rapidly.

Sincerely,

Rev. Marge Ragona
Pastor
M. C. C. Boston

mfr

CC: Rev. Bob Arthur
District Coordinator
S.W. District, UFMCC

Rev. Frank Scott
Pastor
MCC Ventura

Mr. Ernest Lessa
Treasurer
M.C.C. Boston

P.S. On rereading your letter, I also see a notation about some "valuable coins." The coins in question are a silver dollar and a set of 1976 coins (a quarter, dime and nickel or a half-dollar, quarter, dime and nickel) having a face value of $1.40 or $1.90. To the best of my recollection, these coins were left in a box of office supplies which Mr. Tim Kelly was to pick up at our apartment. This box included the church's saddle stapler, filing folders, etc. I do <u>not</u> have these coins.

I remind MCC Ventura that 5 boxes of my belongings were also supposed to be sent to me because we had no room to pack them when we left. Those boxes have never been sent and many of the things in them are needed, particularly our blankets, etc. which were left then as not needed, and which are now extremely necessary. We would appreciate the boxes being sent collect, if the church is unwilling to pay for their shipment.

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF VENTURA

Rev. Frank W. Scott
Rev. Marge Ragona, Pastor
P.O. Box A-O
Ventura CA 93002

4949 Foothill Road
Sunday Services 6:30 p.m.
(805) 985-2594

October 21, 1981

Rev. Marge Ragona
MCC Boston
131 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Marge:

Greetings from sunny/foggy/? Ventura! I trust this finds you well and enjoying Boston. Fred and I are gradually growing accustomed to life here. It's a far cry from Richmond. Amen!

Enclosed is a copy of the church telephone bill. Paul has indicated the calls which he made and will pay for. Without getting into the middle of the situation, I would like to venture a brief description of what seems to have happened.

It is my understanding that when you left, you told the Board that you would pay for your personal calls when the bill was sent to you. As the bills came in, they were paid and the decision was made that Tim should tell you about them at Houston. The idea was to give it a personal touch and to avoid a letter which would seem like sending a formal bill.

So Tim went to Houston - assuming that you had already received a copy of the statement. (Communication got fouled up somewhere.) There he mentioned them to you without any details. Meanwhile the Board assumed he had given you a complete statement of the bill. This set of misunderstandings was not clarified until the October Board meeting a couple weeks ago.

Consequently, when the Board received no response to the bill they thought had been delivered, a letter was sent - not to you, as it should have been, but to your church treasurer. The result of that was your calls to Rosemary and Kathleen - and a great deal of mutual upset and confusion about what was going on.

I finally pieced this together at the Board meeting. It is appromimately what occurred. The hinge was the lack of communication between Tim and the Board - both before and after Houston - with a lot of wrong assumptions resulting.

METROPOLITAN
COMMUNITY CHURCH
OF VENTURA

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I explained to the Board - none of whom seem to be aware of church structure and "politics" - the impropriety of communicating to your church treasurer rather than to you on this personal matter. They recognize their error - it was an honest mistake and not an attempt to undermine your relationship with your vestry. I volunteered to convey their apology to you together with the above explanation. I hope this incident has not created problems for you there.

Ernest Lessa wrote at the beginning of the month requesting a copy of the phone bills. I am sending him one with a brief note.

Marge, the people of MCC Ventura speak of you often, with respect and deep affection. It is evident that you had a really impactive ministry in this community. None of the above confusion and upset has been shared with the congregation. The Board and I - and I am sure, you also - will be glad when all this is settled and is a piece of history.

My prayers are with you. May God bless your ministry in Boston. I know you've wanted this for a long time and I'm delighted that it has finally come to pass.

In Jesus' love,

Frank

Frank W. Scott

cate that the largest percentage of the original books have been lost, borrowed or otherwise depleted.

The oldest book in the collection was published at Madrid in 1639. Ironically, thirty-five of the books bear the signature of Fray Francisco Suñer (1764-1831), who was blind for most of his years at San Buenaventura.

Several superb examples of Chumash basketry are exhibited in the museum. The baskets fashioned by the Indians attached to San Buenaventura were known for their fine workmanship, variety of forms and the extraordinary uses to which they were put. Probably the most interesting of the baskets displayed is a small, deep jar, with a thin braid tied to loops for a handle. Its open-effect is achieved by twisting the material in each stitch. The basket is filled with large seeds.

The cases on the western wall contain a wide assortment of historical mementos associated with the history of San Buenaventura Mission, including the original sanctuary lamp for the first church. A host of farming implements are displayed, as well as such items as a barometer, compass and bellows.

The Indian-made iron cross which formerly stood directly above the main doors of the church is affixed to the west wall. One of the primitive confessionals, together with the two original side doors of the church are also displayed.

A collection of items used at liturgical services is exhibited in the two free-standing glass cases. Included therein are such prized items as a monstrance used by Fray Junipero Serra, an altar stone brought from Mexico City, in 1782, and an edition of the *Missale Romanum* published two years before the establishment of San Buenaventura.

Other noteworthy treasures include a Russian Cross modelled after the *Cruz Rosa de Cobre Esmaldo,* found on the Rancho Canada Larga by Marie Louise Canet, the writing set used by Father Juan Comapla (1824-1878) and a set of heirloom vases which belonged to the Olivas', one of the southland's oldest families.

It is altogether fitting that Ventura's most precious collection of historical artifacts be housed beneath the shadows of the county's Mother Church of San Buenaventura.

The Historical Museum at San Buenaventura Mission

Msgr. Francis J. Weber

Issued in 1976
America's Bicentennial Year

The displaying of historical items associated with San Buenaventura is an old tradition at the mission. Special accommodations for that purpose were provided at least by the turn of the last century.

When President William McKinley visited San Buenaventura Mission on May 10, 1901, the *Star Press* reported that the nation's Chief Executive, Senator Thomas R. Bard and other members of the official party "entered the historical old building and were shown its relics."

The earliest museum seems to have been located in or adjacent to the bell tower. In the late 1920s, a special building was provided on the eastern extremity of the patio, "in order to preserve the treasures and relics of the past."

In *The Tidings* for February 18, 1927, a writer noted that "recently a mission museum has been constructed near the entrance of the old church. There many curious and interesting relics are preserved. Old vestments and books as well as samples of Indian handiwork are gladly shown by an attendant." Cora McGonigle was the first person specifically charged with looking after the historical collection.

In an essay on San Buenaventura Mission written in April, 1930, Sol. N. Sheridan reported that "the Museum has been taken from the bell tower, and a new and attractive museum building has been built in the garden far from the Church proper."

About five years after the purchase and refurbishment of the old Washington Hotel, the museum was moved to the rear section of the two-story edifice at 225 East Main Street, where it remained until the closing weeks of 1975. Unfortunately, little or no security was accorded the historical objects and many were stolen or otherwise alienated in the decade that followed.

Early in the year of the nation's bicentennial, the museum was relocated in its earlier quarters, in the brick building on the east side of the mission patio. The display cases were rebuilt and outfitted with transparent frontices. Special lighting fixtures were installed, as well as carpeting.

A number of items unrelated to the collection were discarded, while other relics of earlier times were gathered from various sources. Most extensive of the new acquisitions are the artifacts amassed by Juan Camarillo II (1867-1936), which were formerly displayed at Saint Mary Magdalen Church. Juan was baptized at San Buenaventura Mission and spent much of his life within the shadows of the ninth and last of Fray Junipero Serra's frontier outposts.

Another of the prominent displays is that of the liturgical vesture used in the provincial era at San Buenaventura. The twenty-three sets of vestments date from the earliest days of the mission. Several of the sets were fashioned from flowered-silk imported from China on the Manila galleons. There is evidence that some of the vestments were used earlier at one or another of the missions in Peninsular California. For the most part they were brought to Alta California by the sea transports, which arrived twice a year at Santa Barbara from San Blas.

The books comprising the *Bibliotheca Sancti Bonaventurae* are exhibited in a case along the western wall of the museum. Almost half of the 146 tomes are printed in Spanish, with Latin, French, Italian and English following, in descending order. Of the titles still remaining in the *Bibliotheca*, eighty-three are bound in sheepskin or faded vellum, while sixty-three are encased in various kinds of less durable substances. Pieces of discarded manuscripts in many of the books indicate they were rebound at an earlier date. The ornamental printing is usually executed on a superb quality of paper which often bears identifiable watermarks.

Most of the books were issued from such European cities as Madrid, Paris, Barcelona, London, Lyons and Venice. The preponderance of incomplete sets and series volumes in the library indi-

1957 by more commodious wood-carved replicas, are among the finest examples of native art in Alta California. Their workmanship is surprisingly even in its motif. The devices used as decorations have been copied by many artists. The only extant confessional is on display in the Historical Museum.

Harry Downie fashioned the wooden chandeliers at his studio in Carmel. They replaced two gilded light fixtures which had been ruined when they were wired for electricity. The replicas are considerably more typical than those they replaced. Mr. Downie also made the present doors. Exact reproductions of the originals and bearing the traditional River-of-Life motif, they are studded with hand-made nails.

The altar in the Serra Chapel was formerly part of the Shrine of the Crucifixion. Removed from the church in the 1950s, it was placed in its present location in order to allow for celebrating the Eucharistic Liturgy in conjunction with Baptism. The large hand-hammered copper baptismal bowl is probably the product of a local Indian craftsman. It has much of the character common to the native copper work from the area of Patzcuaro, Mexico.

The bells at the "Mission by the Sea" were mentioned by George Vancouver. Undoubtedly the British seaman could hear their tones melting away over the blue Pacific waters as he put into shore. The two oldest bells were cast a year before the mission was established. Bearing the unmistakable Spanish outline, they had raised ornamental crosses and a single, three-eyelet handle. One bore the inscription *S. San Francisco 1781* and the other *San Pedro Alcantara 1781.* The *Verbum Domini* bell, attached to an automatic ringing device, was cast at Paris, in 1956, by Marie Louise Canet.

A third, undated bell hanging in the south arch resembles the one at the small Pechanga Indian church. Its uneven lettering reads: *Ave Maria S. Joseph.* The last of the bells is probably the most interesting of the quartet. It is a large, crown-topped bell, with a small cross on its side. Its lettering reads: *Ave Maria Purysyma Maria D. Sapoyan Ano D.* 1825. Very likely it was cast for the Church of Our Lady of Zapopan, near Mexico City.

The twelve wooden crosses, attesting to Cardinal Manning's solemn consecration of the church, were removed from Saint Vibiana's Cathedral, where they adorned the *Via Crucis* for the first century of the cathedral's existence.

Since 1809, the church at San Buenaventura Mission has instilled this portion of the Lord's vineyard with a recognition of His presence. May it long continue to inspire a consciousness of God's love as mirrored in His people.

The Historic Church at San Buenaventura Mission

Msgr. Francis J. Weber

Issued in 1976
America's Bicentennial Year

The church at San Buenaventura, the second oldest house-of-worship in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, has a long and noble history. A visitor to the area in 1895 reported that the structure was "well-preserved, its wall still bearing traces of the rude frescoing affected by the builders of that time." A decade later, George Wharton James noted that it had by then become "an ordinary church, with little but its history to redeem it from the look of smug modernity which is the curse of the present age."

According to George Vancouver, the English navigator, who visited the region in 1793, the first church was destroyed by the ravages of fire. A temporary structure served the ninth and last of Fray Junípero Serra's missionary outposts for most of the following decade. On March 11, 1795 Fray Fermín Francisco de Lasuén reported to the government that the masonry church was about half-finished. The splendid new edifice was completed in the late summer of 1809. Extant records indicate that the first liturgical services were conducted therein on the Feast of the Holy Name, September 10th.

Constructed of tile, stone and adobe, the church's walls are 6½ feet thick. The massive pine and oak timbers hewn for the roof and ceiling beams were fashioned by ax from wood gathered in the San Cayetano mountain area and laboriously drawn by oxen down the coast. The picturesque roofing tiles were fired from the clay of the nearby hills, while the lime and mortar used to bind together the rocks and sun-dried adobes were brought from the Cañada San Buenaventura.

The main altar and reredos, with its wooden pilasters painted to resemble marble, was fashioned in the Romanesque style at Mexico City, in 1808. Though equally as old, its trinity of wooden statues were not intended specifically for the reredos, but added shortly after its installation.

Originally, the likeness of the Immaculate Conception occupied the central niche above the tabernacle. In recent years, it was moved to the left and that of Saint Bonaventure, patron of the mission, was given the place of prominence. The remaining niche houses the image of Saint Joseph with the Infant Jesus.

Directly behind the reredos, space was provided for a small sacristy, with storage facilities for vestments and other appurtenances used for liturgical ceremonies. In 1957, with the addition of a wholly new sacristy wing, the altar and its reredos were moved against the northern extremity of the sanctuary wall.

The original candlesticks were replaced in the mid-1800s with six silver ones brought from Spain. Acquired at the same time were the altar crucifix and the ornate sanctuary lamp. Four of the earlier wooden candlesticks are exhibited in the Historical Museum. The crucifix used in the first years can be seen atop the vestment case in the priests' sacristy.

Early in 1976, the *mensa* and its stipes were separated from the reredos and brought forward to allow for the new liturgy *versus populum*. In April of the same year, the restored wooden tabernacle, with its door-scene of the Good Shepherd, was returned to the central section of the reredos.

Adorning the western wall of the church is the Shrine of the Crucifixion. The four-hundred-year-old *corpus* was sent to California from the Philippines in 1808. The scene of Calvary, a reproduction of the original backdrop, was painted on canvas by Mary Moran in 1976.

Flanking the central figure are costumed statues representing the Mother of Sorrows and Saint John the Evangelist. The smaller images on raised brackets are portrayals of Saints Anthony and Thomas. Originally paneled with woodwork matching that on the main altar-reredos, the shrines have since been refinished in frescoed plaster.

The Shrine of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe features the celebrated 1747 painting by Francisco Cabrero as its centerpiece. To either side can be seen statues of Saints Gertrude and Isidore. Smaller images on elevated pedestals portray Saints Dominic and Francis. The crucifix in front of the painting was brought to San Buenaventura in 1801.

The handsomely-carved and artistically-painted pulpit which formerly projected from the first bay of the east wall near the chancel rail was removed by Father Cyprian Rubio in 1893. Sections of the pulpit were acquired from various sources and reassembled in the sanctuary by Fred Rolla in 1976.

The faldstool, choir stalls and kneeler were carved from native California woods by Eugene Alker for Saint Vibiana's Cathedral, in 1912. They were given to San Buenaventura Mission in 1976, by Cardinal Timothy Manning.

According to the oldest inventories, the fourteen Stations of the Cross were erected in 1809. The paintings came from the easels of an unknown Spanish master between 1735 and 1750. One of them bears the name of José Francisco Servín, who apparently attempted to restore several of the canvases in his studios at Cordoba in 1808.

By 1966, most of the stations were covered with dust and grease, twisted by warped and broken frames and damaged by the humid walls, salt air and amateurish attempts at restoration. The talented Franz A. Trevors spent many months working on the *Via Crucis* and bringing them back to their pristine condition.

The original confessionals, replaced in

more head of cattle, was sufficient to sustain the Indians and whites attached to the mission.

Prior to 1834, there were 3,924 baptisms, 1,107 marriages and 3,216 deaths recorded in the register books. At the height of its service, there were 1,297 Indians living in or attached to San Buenaventura. From 1812 to 1823, the *Presidente* of the California Missions, Fray José Señán, made his residence at San Buenaventura.

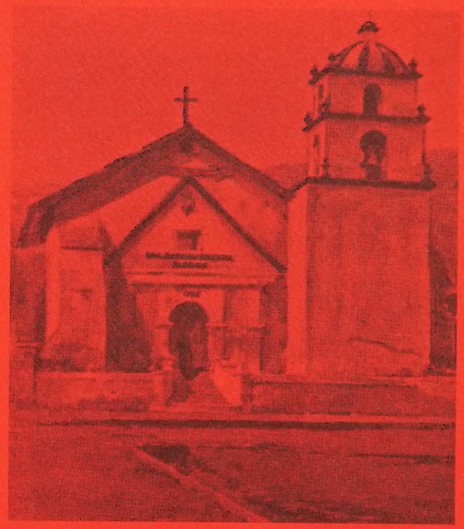
Eugene Duflot de Mofras, a youthful attaché at the French Embassy in Mexico City, visited San Buenaventura in 1842. He described the mission's location as "very beautiful," but noted that the buildings were in "a rather bad condition," some of them occupied by local *rancheros.*

The initial episcopal visitation occurred in April of 1843, when the Right Reverend Francisco García Diego y Moreno, Bishop of Both Californias, confirmed 182 persons at San Buenaventura. In November of that year, the mission became the southland's first canonically established parish, with the appointment of Father José María Rosales as resident pastor.

The original mission lands were leased for nine years to Narciso Botello and José Arnaz, on December 1, 1845. Pio Pico compounded that injustice the following June 8th, by selling the property to Arnaz, a sale that was invalidated by President Abraham Lincoln on May 23, 1862.

The widely-travelled artist, Henry Miller, visited San Buenaventura in 1856, and found it "to be a quiet village of about seventy or eighty houses, inhabited principally by natives and Mexicans." An earthquake did considerable damage the next year by destroying the original roof of the church and totally levelling a number of the remaining structures.

Though only its historic church remains in the 1970s, San Buenaventura Mission continues to occupy a unique role in the historical annals of Ventura County. It is a living testimony to a spirit of devotion and sacrifice which can be understood only within the context of that divine vocation which called the friars to leave home and kindred on behalf of the aboriginal peoples confided to their spiritual care.



Historical Sketch of San Buenaventura Mission

Msgr. Francis J. Weber

Issued in 1978

The Golden State's poet laureate, John Steven McGroarty, once wrote that "the story of the conception, foundation, the rise and fall of the Franciscan missionary establishments in California is at once the most unique, colorful and romantic of stories in the annals of human history, and one of the most important."

The mission named for San Buenaventura was among the earliest frontier outposts envisioned for *El Camino Real.* It was to be located near the entrance of the Santa Barbara Channel, which Fray Junípero Serra felt was better suited than San Diego, Santa Barbara or Monterey "or any other place we have so far discovered."

Just nine days after the inauguration of San Carlos Borromeo, the Franciscan *Presidente* spoke hopefully about the foundation earmarked to be the "third mission in New California." For a host of reasons, however, another dozen years passed before Serra's dreams could be realized.

Finally, on Easter Sunday, March 31, 1782, the mission dedicated to *el Glorioso Obispo-Cardenal Seráfico de Iglesia, San Buenaventura,* was formally begun, at a place initially designated as *Asunción de Nuestra Señora* or *La Assumpta.*

It was a fortunate location, indeed, for at that time the Santa Barbara Channel was the most densely-populated coastal area south of San Francisco. Serra had earlier observed that the countryside was "dotted with great numbers of well-organized *pueblos.*"

The relationship between the friars and the neophytes was regulated by a decree issued in 1773, from Viceroy Antonio María Bucareli which directed that "the government control and education of the baptized Indians should belong exclusively to the missionaries." The Bucareli directive further stipulated that the supervision was to be carried out "in all economic affairs as would a father of a family regarding the care of his household, and the education and correction of his children."

Hence it came about from the earliest days of European presence at San Buenaventura that the Christianized Indians and those preparing to embrace the Catholic faith were totally subject to the friars in all spiritualities and temporalities. In the exercise of their administrative duties, the friars received whatever aid and protection was needed from the military garrison attached to Santa Barbara Presidio.

The main objective of the friars at San Buenaventura and elsewhere was always the salvation of souls through Christian indoctrination and practice. They realized that however time-consuming and onerous the economic aspect of the missions were, such burdens were an absolutely vital part of their overall apostolate.

The Spanish Government was quick to understand that the best means for the Indians to receive both a Christian and Hispanic social, political and economic training was one which encompassed all aspects of daily living. Thus the friars became, in effect, both apostles of the Church and agents of the state. The Christianized Indians, for their part, became practical Christians and useful citizens of the commonwealth.

The first Baptism at San Buenaventura was administered by Fray Pedro Benito Cambon on April 27, 1782, to José Crescensio, the infant son of Eugenio Váldez and Sebastiana Josefa Quintexa. Nine months later, the sacrament was conferred upon the first native of the region, Domingo José, a ten year old boy from the Ranchería de Valesque. By the end of 1785, there were 133 entries recorded in the Baptismal Register. On August 30, 1782, Fray Francisco Dumetz performed the first marriage, uniting Alejandro de la Cruz and María Concepción Monteil. Thirty-six adobe buildings were built at the mission in 1804, and another twenty-nine the following year. Other crude structures were added soon after, including a tannery and granary.

George Vancouver visited the ninth and last of Fray Junípero Serra's missionary outposts in 1793. The English navigator was impressed with its well-mannered Indians, the orchards of apples, peaches, plums and pomegranates, its vineyards, vegetables and herds of cattle.

In a report for 1806, the resident friar at San Buenaventura reported that "our flock continues to grow steadily. A few years ago there were only slightly more than 700 neophytes at the Mission, but at the close of 1805 they numbered 1,141. At present," he said, "84 others are also under instruction."

Except for a three month period after the disastrous earthquake of 1812, when the friars moved the neophyte population to safer regions, San Buenaventura Mission has been in constant use since its foundation.

The mission attained the pinnacle of its development in 1816, when the neophyte population reached 1,328 souls. In the years following 1820, a decline set in which continued without abatement until the baneful blight of secularization totally ruined the once-flourishing establishment.

On May 31, 1819, a small band of Mojave Indians arrived at the mission, much to the bewilderment of the local natives. A scuffle ensued and trigger-happy soldiers shot and killed ten of the visitors. Two soldiers and one neophyte from San Buenaventura were also fatally injured.

In a report for 1822, Fray José Señán enumerated the material holdings of the mission and noted that wheat, barley, maize and kidney beans had been planted. He pointed out that those crops, together with the weekly slaughter of forty or

RECEIPT AND STATEMENT OF CHARGES

Received of

Receipt № 87950

Date 5/10 19 81

MARJORIE F. RAGOWA
Name

481 ROCKMAN Way P.H.
Address

Bail Bond Premium $ 100 ⁼⁼

Expenses (Itemize in detail, such as Guard Fees, Recording Fees, Notary Fees, Long Distance Calls, Telegrams, Travel and other actual, unusual expenses) $

$

$

$

$

FRANK MORA
BAIL BONDS
P. O. BOX 7216
OXNARD, CA 93031
647-8586

TOTAL CHARGES $ 100. ⁼⁼

Received on Account $ 100. ⁼⁼

Balance $ 0

Was Collateral taken? (YES) (NO)

If Yes. No. of Collateral Receipt

NAME AND ADDRESS OF BAIL BOND AGENCY

By Frank Mora

MEMORANDUM OF BAIL BOND FURNISHED

Defendant MARY K. WOLFE Bond No. 590688

Charge 487.1 PC Amount of Bond $ 1000 ⁼⁼

Date Filed Date Released 5/10/81

Date to Appear 5/28/81 Time 8:30 AM Case No. B59785-2

Court NORTH COUNTY MUNICIPAL City VISTA, CA.

Surety Co.

Allied Fidelity Insurance Co.

Received Copy of above receipt and Memo:

Marjorie F. Ragowa

AF CAL-3 (1-75)

White - Original Copy
Yellow - Company's Copy
Pink - Agent's Copy

FRANK MORA
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P. O. BOX 7215
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647-8585

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Rev. Marge Ragona, Pastor
P.O. Box A-O
Ventura CA 93002

4949 Foothill Road
Sunday Services 6:30 p.m.
(805) 985-2594

DEAR MCC FRIENDS,

The time interval between this and the previous newsletter is a small indication of the pace of life at the parsonage. April raced by us with Palm Sunday, Good Friday services, Easter morning and baptism services at Chan's in Carpinteria, followed by Sunday evening Easter services in Ventura. The following Sunday, Rev. Marge informed the congregation that she had accepted the MCC Boston pastorate. Since that time, including the Wednesday night weekly trip to STI where Marge teaches and the Tuesday deacons' meeting at the parsonage, both Marge and I are excitedly preparing for our move to Massachusetts on June 7. As you will find out in this newsletter, May will also be an extremely busy month.

It is with deep regret that I edit this last newsletter for MCC Ventura. Kathleen and Terri have volunterred to co-edit after I leave. It is a good feeling to leave the newletter in such capable hands.

In God's Love,
Sheila

TIM TO BECOME WORSHIP COORDINATOR AT MCC VENTURA

Tim has been chosen by the Board to become the MCC Ventura lay worship coordinator after Rev. Marge leaves Ventura. His duties will include preparation and leading of the worship service, and helping the Board to call a new pastor to Ventura. We would like to ask God's blessing and care to Tim as he leads Ventura MCC in the hopefully short interim between pastors.

VARIOUS CHURCH MEMBERS NEED YOUR PRAYERS AND VISITS

Many church members, Jo, Rosemary, Linda's grandmother, and more, are presently suffering problems with their health. Keep them in your prayers. Try to visit them if you can, to shorten their very long, trying days.

MAY 16 DANCE TO BE HELD AT MCC VENTURA

May 16 will be the date of the MCC Ventura dance. Recorded music will be the background from 8 to 12 pm at 4949 Foothill Road in Ventura. Admission will be $3, donation. Beer, wine, and soft drinks will be on sale at reasonable prices. The profits of the dance will be divided between the church's travel fund for General Conference in Houston and the Gay and Lesbian Resource Center in Santa Barbara. Come join us, and celebrate, and also help to support two gay/lesbian projects locally.

There are moments in the life of the church that make all of us unhappy. One of those moments has arrived. It is time to say "Good-bye" to Ventura and to return East in order to take up work in Boston.

As many of you know, I did my final Exhorter year at MCC Boston, and learned to love that church and its people. I dreamed then of some day pastoring there, but never dreamed it would come true. Yet, God has led me by a circuitous path first to Providence and then to Ventura -- but which is finally taking me home to Boston.

When I came to Ventura it was as Worship Coordinator. I was asked to stay just long enough to "bury" the church, to hold services through the fall to the Christmas season and then close the church after the New Year. That was 1979. It is now May of 1980 and I have been here for nearly 20 months when I had intended to stay for three months.

During that time the church has grown from 7 active members to a thriving congregation of about 45 -- actually more members than that, but that many are <u>active</u> in the life of the church. Our budget is healthy. The pastor's salary has gone from $10.00 a week to over $300.00 a month. The church has an eager Board of Directors, 4 deacon candidates, an exhorter candidate, a music director and a wonderful choir. It also has a dedicated young worship coordinator who will be keeping things going until a new pastor is chosen. There are people available who would like to pastor at Ventura, because MCC Ventura is seen as a successful small church.

Ventura's MCC has an identity now. It is a church which is deeply rooted in solid Christian faith -- and speaks and sings that faith "inclusively." It is a young church -- most of our members are delightfully young both in age and in spirit. Yet it is a <u>traditional</u> church, enjoying and sharing the rich seasons of the Christian year, and finding worth and value in those traditions. It is a church where God is changing lives, and many of our members can and do testify to what the church has meant and done in their lives. It is a <u>good</u> church, with a loving, gentle disposition. It is a happy church and a caring church.

I do not want to leave this church -- and I do not leave because of any problem or difficulty here. I leave because God has called me to another task, probably more difficult than Ventura. I feel called not only to a church (although certainly to that church) but to a District. I feel the need to return to the Northeast to help provide leadership to a district which I see as needing an infusion of ministers from varying backgrounds to help provide balance. From my old Baptist background and my feminist leanings, I think I can help provide that balance. I also think I can help provide a <u>maturity</u> to help balance the youthfulness of that District, and possibly be of some help to the younger Worship Coordinators and Exhorters there from the years I have spent in and around churches.

I love Ventura. I love my congregation. I love the beautiful area in which we live. I will miss it all, and miss all of you. I know you will keep on working for God -- if I know you well, you cannot help yourselves, God has called you -- and you will keep on working for the liberation of all people. God love you all.

Rev. Marge

MCC CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR MAY

Sat. 5/9	7:30 pm	Robin Tyler concert, MCC-LA, 6th & Hill, LA
Sun. 5/11	5:00 pm	Choir rehearsal, MCC Ventura
	6:30 pm	Evening services, MCC Ventura, 4949 Foothill
Tues.5/12	12 noon	Rev. Ragona, VC Women's Center, "So You Think You're a Lesbian"
Wed. 5/13	7-10 pm	Helpline training session, 501 W. Channel Islands Blvd, #302, Pt. Hueneme
Fri. 5/15	8 pm	Holly Near Concert, Royce Hall, UCLA, LA
Sat. 5/16	8-12 pm	MCC Ventura dance, 4949 Foothill Road
Sun. 5/17	5 pm	Choir rehearsal, MCC Ventura
	6:30 pm	Evening services, MCC Ventura, 4949 Foothill Rd.
Tues.5/19	12 noon	Deacons' meeting, parsonage
Thurs5/21	7 pm	Helpling training session, 501 W. Channel Islands Blvd, #302, Pt. Hueneme
Fri. 5/22 thru Mon. 5/25		
		U.F.M.C.C. District Conference in Santa Ana
Sat. 5/23 thru Sun. 5/31		
		Gay and Lesbian Unity Week in Santa Barbara
Sat. 5/23	11:30 am	Kickoff Potluck/Picnic, Rocky Nook Pk, Santa Barbara
Sun. 5/24	1:30 pm	Watch Rev. Ragona on KEYT-TV "Focus", (Chan. 3)
	5:00 pm	Choir rehearsal, MCC Ventura
	6:30 pm	Memorial service for Gay Holocaust Victims of World War II, MCC Ventura, 4949 Foothill Road,
Mon. 5/25	8 pm	"An Evening at Borsodi's", Entertainment, Music, 938 Embarcadero del Norte, Isla Vista, $1
Tues.5/26	12 noon	Rally at UCSB Storke PLaza, keynote address by ACLU atty, Susan McGrievy
	12 noon	Deacons' meeting, parsonage
	8 pm	Films and discussions at GLRC, 1128 De La Vina, Santa Barbara (Addressing Alcoholism in the Gay & Lesbian community)
Wed. 5/27	7:30 pm	Community panel discussion, Westside Comm. Ctr, 423 E. Victoria St, S.B. (Achieving Gay rights in the 1980's)

Fri. 5/29	7:30 pm	Gay/Lesbian Memorial Day slide talk, Davis Recreation Ctr, 1232 De La Vina St., S.B. "Marching to the sound of a Different Drummer-Coming Out in WW II" by Allan Berube, S.F. and coffee and discussion afterwards at GLRC, 1128 De La Vina St., Santa Barbara
	9 pm	Gay & Lesbian dance, UCSB Cafe Interim, $2 donation
Sat. 5/30	10-2	Festival/Rally, De La Guerra Plaza, Santa Barbara, near City Hall. (Booths, Music, Mime, Speakers: including Rev. Ragona)
5/30	8:30 pm	Open House & Reception at GLRC, 1128 De La Vina, Santa Barbara, with special guest Midge Costanza, $3 donation
Sun. 5/31	4 pm	Concert, LA Gay Men's Chorus, Campbell Hall, UCSB, (Tickets $5/$4 from Mutual Ticket Agncy)
	5 pm	Choir rehearsal MCC Ventura
	6 pm	Reception for Chorus and community, Women's Center, free with chorus ticket stub, otherwise $1
	6:30 pm	Evening services, MCC Ventura, 4949 Foothill Road
	7:30 pm	Films "You are Not Alone" (gay) and "Susanna" (Lesbian) at Campbell Hall, UCSB, $1.50
Sun. 6/7	6:30	Last service at MCC Ventura for Rev. Ragona before leaving for MCC Boston

HELPLINE TO BECOME OPERATIONAL ON JUNE 1, 1981

According to Joe Cunningham, the Gay Helpline will become an reality soon. Training sessions have been planned and are included in the calendar of events in this newsletter. All volunteers are required to attend at least three meetings to be properly trained to assist on the helpline.

GAY/LESBIAN UNITY WEEK TO BE HELD IN SANTA BARBARA

Richard Campiglia, Executive Director of the Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, said that the week has been made possible through a special $3,500 matching grant to the Center from the Sunflower Foundation of Santa Barbara; interested individuals and organizations in the community are expected/needed to contribute the matching $3,500.

Donations--needed for the matching grant--should be directed to the Gay and Lesbian Resource Center and marked "Unity Week Fund." Volunteers wishing to participate by serving on task forces (Chorus, Film, Education, Festival/Rally, Media/Publicity) should phone 963-3636.

DISTRICT CONFERENCE TO BE HELD MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

The Santa Ana MCC, pastored by Rev. Rodger Harrison, will host the SouthWestern district conference as it celebrates its tenth anniversary. Santa Ana church members are offering their homes for MCCers as a welcome change to expensive hotel rooms. Registration forms are available either at the church following services or call the parsonage at 985-2594 for more information.

REV. RAGONA TO APPEAR ON SANTA BARBARA TV PROGRAM

On May 6, Rev. Ragona was a member on a KEYT-TV program "Focus" which will air on Channel 3 on May 24 at 1:30 pm. She provided expert witness to both Gay/Lesbian activism as well as her Christian ministry.

CRISIS AND INFORMATION LINE

We wanted publicity and boy, did we get it!! On Thursday, July 7, the Ventura Star Free Press ran an excellent article about the Gay and Lesbian Crisis and Information Service of Ventura County. This article was delivered to over 100,000 homes throughout the county. This is about one fith of the county's population, which means that one fifth of the gay/lesbian population got the message that we are here. It is up to you who are a part of that one fifth to let the other four fifths know. One way to let them know is to tell them about the BEACH PARTY on July 30. We would like to see 1,000 people or more at this party. Not only to raise money, but to get to know one another and let everyone know what the "Crisis Line" is all about.

AIDS - Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome - If you are still confused by all of the different things you read and hear about AIDS, I urge you pick up a brochure by the Los Angeles AIDS PROJECT. This brochure has the real facts and symptoms and should put your minds at ease. If you suspect that you may have AIDS, or if you show any of the many symptoms, you should consult a physician immediately. If you do not have a physician, call the 'Crisis Line' at 656-8463 and we will refer you to one locally, or to the AIDS CLINIC in Los Angeles. If you would like to talk to someone about AIDS, you can call the NATIONAL AIDS HOTLINE at (800) 342-2437. The AIDS brochure may be picked up at the Church, or at the 'Crisis Line' office, 1975 'B' S. Victoria in Ventura.

SEE YOU ALL AT THE BEACH PARTY ON THE 30TH.!!!

* *

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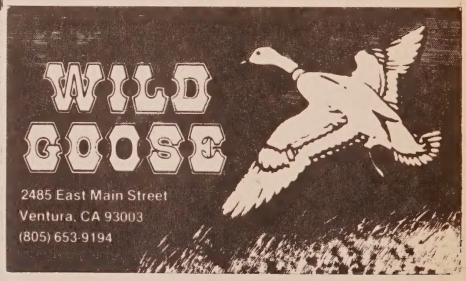

AUGUST 1983

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
July S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1 MCC FAMILY SHARING	Last Quarter 2 CRISIS BD. MEETING	3	4 MCC BIBLE STUDY	5	6 PICNIC MCC/DIGNITY ARROYO VERDE PARK - NOON
7 MCC/6:20PM	New Moon 8 MCC FAMILY SHARING	9	10	11 MCC BIBLE STUDY	12	13
14 DIGNITY MASS 5:00 P MCC/6:20PM	First Quarter 15 MCC FAMILY SHARING	16	17	18 MCC BIBLE STUDY	19	20
21 MCC/6:20PM	22 MCC FAMILY SHARING	Full Moon 23	24	25 MCC BIBLE STUDY	26 7:00PM SOLO ARTIST	27
28 MCC/6:20PM	29 MCC FAMILY SHARING	30	Last Quarter 31	FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON CALENDAR EVENTS CALL 656-8463		

JULY 1983

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
June S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	August S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	FOR FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING CALENDAR EVENTS, CALL BOB 656-8463 LET US KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING!! 656-8463			1 Canada Day Canada	2
3 Last Quarter MCC 6:20P	4 Family Sharing MCC Independence Day	5	6	7 Bible Study - MCC	8	9
10 New Moon MCC 6:20P DIGNITY 5:00PM	11 Family Sharing MCC	12	13	14 Bible Study - MCC	15	16 Women of Dignity LA Mass 6:00 PM
17 First Quarter MCC 6:20P	18 Family Sharing MCC	19 Crisis Bd. Mtg. 7:30 PM	20	21 Bible Study - MCC Women of Dig. LA - Lecture 8:00 PM	22	23 8:00 PM at MCC SOJOURNER
24 Full Moon MCC 31 6:20 P. M.	25 Family Sharing	26 Women of Dignity LA Potluck 6:45 PM	27	28 Bible Study- MCC Women of Dig. LA - Lecture 8:00PM	29 LA Solo Artists	30 NOON VENTURA BEACH ALL GAY PARTY SPINAKER DR.

Deacon's Beacon

POLITICS AND RELIGION - These are the two subjects that are always to be avoided at cocktail partys, right? Wrong!! Wake up folks, this is the twentieth century. A few years ago I would have agreed with that statement, but the time has come when we should open our mouths and let others know what we are thinking.

POLITICS - Every four years we have to listen to all of the presidential hopefuls tell us how good they are, and how bad their opponent is. This year we have a new topic to talk about - GAY EQUALITY. "I would send a signal to all levels of the government that no discrimination would be allowed for any minorities. That includes sexual preference, and if that means legislation, I would pursue it." This is a quote from Senator Gary Hart, a democrat from Colorado. Any candidate who can make a statement like that deserves our support. I, for one, will be on his campaign wagon, and he will definitely get my vote in the next presidential election.

RELIGION - This is always a good topic with which to start an argument, or at least a good debate. You can always find someone who will tell you that their religion is the best. I will admit that MCC may not be for everyone, but it has been the best Church that I have found in my forty plus years. In the past month I have learned more true facts about Bible history that I could have ever learned from any other Church. Sodom did not go up in smoke because it was full of homosexuals. Historians are re-reading and re-translating the Bible, and are finding all kinds of new interpretations. I would invite you to come to MCC and learn about these new findings. If you still have the fear that God does not love you because you are gay or lesbian, you can drop that fear. "AND WE HAVE KNOWN AND BELIEVED THE LOVE THAT GOD HATH TO US. GOD IS LOVE, AND HE THAT DWELLETH IN LOVE DWELLETH IN GOD, AND GOD IN HIM." I John 4:16

This month Linda and I have the pleasure of welcomming two new Deacon Candidates into our program. Chris Bark and Kathy Gray have been motivated by God to join our Pastoral Staff. We look forward to working with these two fine people, and would ask that you give them the same support and love that you have given to Linda and myself.

Bob

EACH ONE REACH ONE

Dignity
Ventura County

P.O. BOX 5799 • OXNARD, CALIF. 93031

Chris Vender, Coordinator
Joseph, Newsletter Editor
(new deadline for newsletter - 15th. of each month)

Dignity Information Line - 484-0018

FIRST VENTURA COUNTY BEACH PARTY!!!

WHEN: Saturday, July 30 12 NOON

WHERE: At the Ventura Marina (See Map)

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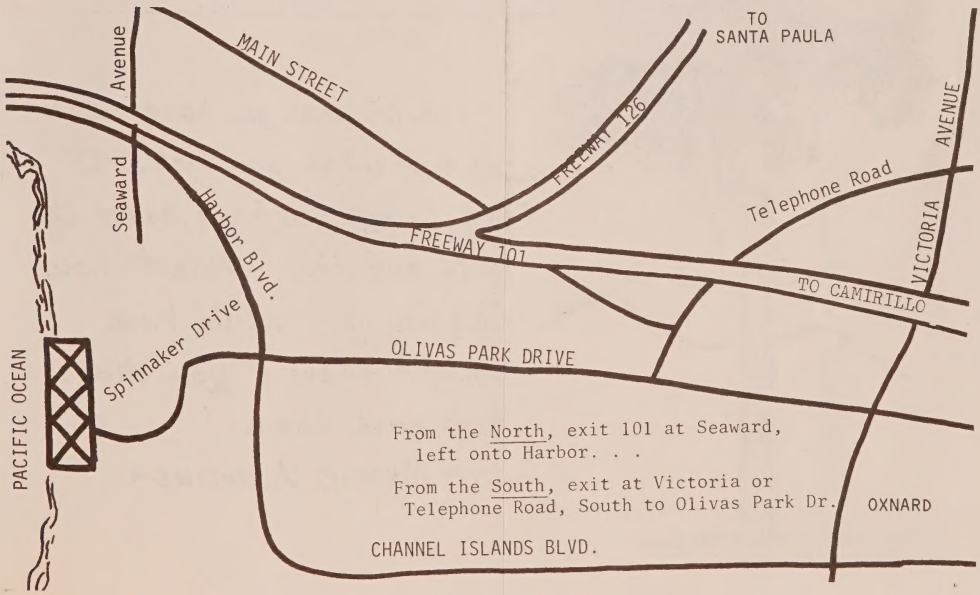

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To share large 4 BR home with jacuzzi. M or F, must be conservative - responsible. $275/mo. or exchange part for gardening, etc. References required - call 656-8463 for info. or write:

RENTAL
VICTORIA STATION #403
1975 'B' S. VICTORIA AVE.
VENTURA, CA. 93003

"Think of what you have rather than of what you lack. Of the things you have, select the best and then reflect how eagerly you would have sought them if you did not have them."

~ MARCUS AURELIUS

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF VENTURA

Rev. Frank W. Scott
P.O. Box A-O
Ventura, CA. 93002

4949 Foothill Road
Sunday Worship 6:30 PM
805-653-5291

JULY 1983

GRATEFUL

I'M GRATEFUL FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER,
GRATEFUL I CAN CALL AND KNOW HE'S THERE;
GRATEFUL FOR THE PEACE THAT FLOODS MY SOUL,
FOR THE STRENGTH TO PRESS ON TOWARD THE GOAL,
FOR THE FAITH THAT BANISHES ALL DOUBT,
FOR THE HOPE THAT PUTS MY FEARS TO ROUT;
GRATEFUL FOR THE SWEET SURCEASE FROM CARE --
GRATEFUL FOR THE PRIVILAGE OF PRAYER.

- HELEN LOWRIE MARSHALL -

The SOJOURNER Quartet, an outgrowth of the MARKINGS production, will be appearing in concert at 8:00 P.M. on Saturday, July 23 at the Uniterian-Universalist Church. This group has already performed to appreciative audiences and received standing ovations for their blend, versality and stage presence. They have been asked to sing a concert for the anniversary of the Bakersfield church in August.

The music for this concert is taken from classic, gospel, popular and spiritual sources with something for everybody to enjoy. Whether the music be popular ballad, choral-classic, show-stopping musical comedy, heart-bending folk, or toe-tapping spiritual, you will be thoroughly entertained by this group.

THE SOJOURNER QUARTET will be appearing in its first Ventura County concert on Saturday, July 23, 1983 at 8:00 P.M. at the Ventura Unitarian-Universalist Church, 4949 Foothill Road in Ventura.

Tickets are $8.50 and may be obtained from any of the quartet members, Mark, Tim, or Wayne. Half of the proceeds from the concert will go to M.C.C., Ventura. For ticket reservations and further information contact : WAYNE ALLEN - 933-2096.

COME, BRING A FRIEND OR TWO AND ENJOY A PLEASENT EVENING OF SINGING AND ENTERTAINMENT!!

* *

Church Calendar

Sunday Evenings - 5:30 P.M. Choir Rehearsal
6:30 P.M. Worship Service
8:00 P.M. Fellowship

Monday Evenings - 8:00 P.M. Lay-led Christian Family Sharing Group at Chris' home. Call 985-0480 for information.

Thursday Evenings - 8:00 P.M. Bible Study at Pastor's home.

PASTORAL STAFF:
PASTOR - Rev. Frank Scott 653-5291
DEACONS - Bob Ray 654-8463
Linda Derbyshire . . . 525-1847

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF VENTURA

TIM KELLY – Worship Coordinator
P.O. Box A-O
Ventura CA 93002

EDITOR - KARLA

4949 Foothill Road
Sunday Services 6:30 p.m.
(805) 985-2594

introducing...

People of MCC Ventura, meet your new pastor..... the Reverend Frank Scott. And while we're at the introductions, meet Rev. Franks lover of two years-Fred. Of the many people that Tim and Bill interviewed at General Conference, this was the person that they both felt was right for Ventura. At the congregational meeting on August 30th, the people of our church agreed with Tim and Bill and voted to bring Rev. Scott to Ventura as our new pastor.

Rev. Scott is currently residing in Richmond, Virginia. He is very energetic and outgoing as evidenced by his founding of two new MCC's in the past eight years..... in one of those he took the number of active members from 30 to 150 in just one year. He's even served as a district coordinator in the East. It's only by a true act of fate that Rev. Frank is even available to us. He was on his way to England to serve as the assistant pastor for the World Church Extension of MCC (even had all his belongings packed), when, due to Englands economy and high unemployment, both he and Fred were denied work visas. Needless to say, about the time Rev Frank Scott needed a church, MCC Ventura needed a pastor.

Just a few notes on Rev Scotts services..... our 41 year old pastor is, in his words "conservative, moderately charismatic(e.g. I believe in the gifts of the Spirit and keep oil for healing on the altar-otherwise it is a personal expression of worship) and inclusive in my use of language and in theology." He normally doesn't wear the clerical "drag" during his worship services.(Meaning robes, etc..... just the collar)

As soon as our finances are in a state that we can pay moving expenses for Rev Frank and Fred to get to Ventura(via their automobile), they'll be here. Therefore the following couple of Sundays will be using the theme "Bring your cans to church"(aluminum type!!!) Whatever cash we recieve for them will be put into our Frank and Fred Fund. We'll also be having some offerings at the services exclusively for this fund. Any donations are welcome. Rev. Scott and Fred have generously offered to just pack whatever will fit into their car, drive out and send for the rest of their belongings when the church can afford it. The offer is very greatly appreciated, but we'd much rather move all of them at once!

Hope to see all of you at church finding out more about the new kid in town. Don't forget your cans!

P.S. Amoung the many persons who endorsed Rev. Frank Scott were our previous pastor, Marge Ragona and our current District Coordinator, Rev. Bob Arthur!

general conference

tim

General Conference X was an enlightning, spiritually up-lifting experience that was beyond words. The love in the smiles of passing strangers from MCC's through out the country and the world, made God's presence obvious. Though strong words during the decsion-making sessions were frequent, their deep thought and well meaning truly emphasized the dedication of this group of loving people. The mood of the conference seemed to be "live with open love today so that our future generations may live to love tomorrow."

Inclusive Language has been a delicate issue that few of have felt comfortable discussing, even amoung good friends, for fear of causing hard feelings. Well folks, gather a couple thousand concerned Christians searching for an answer through God, for loving, humane reasons and you've got the answer.....Now we may worship God, each in our own way. The Lord, after all, is our personal savior. It was decided by all, that we should be able to talk to God as we individually need to. He or She... the only thing that matters is that we communicate with each other and God, and share that love.

The services (at least two daily) were inspirational, the music fantastic... in fact, the entire conference was beyond words.

If you've ever wondered about MCC's founder, you'll have a chance to meet him soon .....more later!

In God's Love,

Tim

P.S. Contact me if you would like more info on conference.

bill

General Conference X has been a wonderful and enlightening experience for me. I learned so much about the function of MCC, and the good we do at home and around the world. It was great to realize and use the voice of our congregation in changing and adding to MCC as a whole. I also learned alot about attitudes, the importance of tithing, and the remarkable work of World Church extention which have been founded all over the world by MCC. In the coming years there will be MCC's in Communist countries and on most all the continents of the world.

During the World Church extension worship service, slides were shown of our MCC in Nigeria. It was amazing to see how much harder it is for the people to live there. With very few nurses and little medicines, the people are suffering from malnutrition and other various diseases. After that service, I came to realize how very lucky and blessed I am. I thank God for the opportunity of going to Houston. It was one of the most unforgettable spiritually fulfilling experiences of my life.

Thank You,

Bill

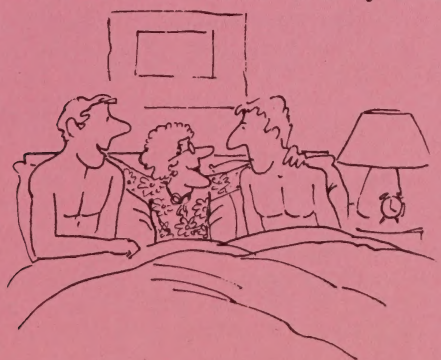
$Vegas$

The next District Conference will be held on Nov. 6, 7, and 8th in Las Vegas. We're going to be organizing carpools, hotel accomedations and related details. Plan now!!! Call Tim at 985-2594 to get more info.

A thank you from MCC Ventura to both Tim and Bill. Because of our weak finacial status we were unable to give these guys much more than moral support. They both took a week off from work, without pay, and begged and borrowed money from friends and/or family to get themselves to Houston. As if they weren't busy enough with conference business, they found time enough to interview many men and women for the position of our new pastor. It looks as if they were sucessful and that they made a wise choice to present to those of us at MCC Ventura. Remember that any of us can go to the next conference in Quebec, Canada if he or she desires. Start saving now!

SUNDAY MEETIN'

Besides voting on the issue of a pastor, the people present at the congregational meeting of Aug. 30th had a few other matters of importance to vote on. Also at that meeting Tim read the resignation of Jean Lawrence from the board... that left a vacancy to be filled. The two nominees came very close, but Rosemary was made a board member over B.J. by a vote of 12 to 10. The two most recent board members, Wally and Kathleen, were approved by the congregation also. Finally, Paul moved that a Budget Commitee be formed. It was approved with Kathleen, the treasurer heading it and being assisted by both of our Bills and by Paul.



"When Mother accepts something, she goes all the way."

OCTOBER!

- Coming up in late October will be a potluck dinner/get-together in the home of Joe Crilly. A rare treat will be offered at this festivity.... homemade beer.(Like most of the finer things in life, there is a price on the beer!) Plan to keep a week-end open.... we'll be setting a definite date soon. Thanks Joe for the idea and the use of your home!!

- Also coming up in October will be a car wash and a Halloween dance. If any of you have any ideas for fund raisers, trips, parties or any other activities(lets keep it clean!) PLEASE call Kathleen @ 653-2763.

August Speakers

Our pulpit was a place of distinguished visitors with inspired words of wisdom this month. August started out with a lively, stimulating visit from Jaye Page. The following week Paul Breton, always the teacher, shared with us some of his knowledge on the subject of the sacrements. We had a rare treat while Tim and Bill were at conference.... a visit from the District Coordinator, Bob Arthur. That same week, Wally did a great job of leading the service. On the 23rd a hyped-up Tim had returned from Houston and spread some of his love and happiness to all of us in his service and sermon. Our ever-loving Tim conducted the final services of this month also. Variety now and then at church is a welcome change, but too much variety can show wear on a congregation. Fortunately, all those new faces behind the pulpit will soon be coming to a close. We've appreciated the opportunity to meet new and different people, but some stability and consistency will be very welcome in ou church.

invest!

If you are interested in forming a chapter of National Association of Investment clubs to study stocks for investment please call Joe Crilly at 482-5405.

HELP
I need somebody

The Gay and Lebian Helpline has returned to the Ventura County area. Beginning Sept. 1st, the helpline is now manned (and womanned) from 10 am to 10 pm every day except Sunday. The number will still be 985-3535. Please call Joe @ 984-7701 if you have any questions or are interested in working the helpline.

ALS returns

After taking a break, along with the other Ventura College clubs, Alternative Lifestyles is returning as an active organiization to the campus. As in every new group, ALS can always use people power. If you fit into either the people or power category or both---- call Ron @ 642-1044.

LOCAL YOKEL

Theres a person in our midst who often goes unnoticed. She offered to lead the choir when she first came to Ventura, when we lost a pianist-she filled the vacancy, every week she is usually the one who has organized the hymns that we sing(sometimes she's done that job from a hospital bed) and she's done all this without a complaint and always with a smile. Because of her ever cheerful outlook, very few people even realize that Jo has a serious medical problem. Last but not least, who else could injure herself while trying not to hit an animal in the street? A special and heartfelt thanks to Jo Woolard. We love you.

the party's over

by B.J.

Saturday, August 22, 1981. We headed north on 101 for Morro Bay. The weather here was warm and sunny. After Turning onto Hwy. 1 it began to get a little cool and foggy. Getting there was easy....finding the picnic sight took a little longer! After a scenic drive from one end of Morro Bay to the other, we finally found one another. We then spent the afternoon at the base of "The Rock" getting to know the 65 brothers and sisters from surrounding MCC's. We had folks from Fresno, San Luis Obispo, Bakersfield, Santa Barbara, Sunnyvale, Ontario, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and beautiful downtown Ventura. We all chatted, ate and then a few joined in for a "boys vs girls" football game.(although I'm not sure that the Football league would approve of the way it was played) The game had to be called a tie at 0-0 because the "boys" seemed more interested in each other than they were in the game. There are plans to have another MCC day at Lake Cachuma in S.B. next spring. Definite plans to be sent to all as soon as they're confirmed. It was nice to get together with all our brothers and sisters from other areas, although it's too bad we had to greet each other through the fog. God's Blessings were with us all.

Thanks So Much!!

Thank you doesn't even begin to express our gratitude to a very, very talented man, Darrell. Darrells piano playing and singing on Aug.23rd and 30th were definitely a joyous noise to everyone within earshot. We understand that he is no stranger to MCC's piano-he used to be the regular pianist some time ago. We hope his beautiful music will continue to bless the people of MCC Ventura. Thank you again Darrell!!!

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF VENTURA

Rev. Marge Ragona, Pastor
P.O. Box A-O
Ventura CA 93002

4949 Foothill Road
Sunday Services 6:30 p.m.
(805) 985-2594

DEAR MCC FRIENDS,

The time interval between this and the previous newsletter is a small indication of the pace of life at the parsonage. April raced by us with Palm Sunday, Good Friday services, Easter morning and baptism services at Chan's in Carpinteria, followed by Sunday evening Easter services in Ventura. The following Sunday, Rev. Marge informed the congregation that she had accepted the MCC Boston pastorate. Since that time, including the Wednesday night weekly trip to STI where Marge teaches and the Tuesday deacons' meeting at the parsonage, both Marge and I are excitedly preparing for our move to Massachusetts on June 7. As you will find out in this newsletter, May will also be an extremely busy month.

It is with deep regret that I edit this last newsletter for MCC Ventura. Kathleen and Terri have volunteered to co-edit after I leave. It is a good feeling to leave the newletter in such capable hands.

In God's Love,
Sheila

TIM TO BECOME WORSHIP COORDINATOR AT MCC VENTURA

Tim has been chosen by the Board to become the MCC Ventura lay worship coordinator after Rev. Marge leaves Ventura. His duties will include preparation and leading of the worship service, and helping the Board to call a new pastor to Ventura. We would like to ask God's blessing and care to Tim as he leads Ventura MCC in the hopefully short interim between pastors.

VARIOUS CHURCH MEMBERS NEED YOUR PRAYERS AND VISITS

Many church members, Jo, Rosemary, Linda's grandmother, and more, are presently suffering problems with their health. Keep them in your prayers. Try to visit them if you can, to shorten their very long, trying days.

MAY 16 DANCE TO BE HELD AT MCC VENTURA

May 16 will be the date of the MCC Ventura dance. Recorded music will be the background from 8 to 12 pm at 4949 Foothill Road in Ventura. Admission will be $3, donation. Beer, wine, and soft drinks will be on sale at reasonable prices. The profits of the dance will be divided between the church's travel fund for General Conference in Houston and the Gay and Lesbian Resource Center in Santa Barbara. Come join us, and celebrate, and also help to support two gay/lesbian projects locally.

There are moments in the life of the church that make all of us unhappy. One of those moments has arrived. It is time to say "Good-bye" to Ventura and to return East in order to take up work in Boston.

As many of you know, I did my final Exhorter year at MCC Boston, and learned to love that church and its people. I dreamed then of some day pastoring there, but never dreamed it would come true. Yet, God has led me by a circuitous path first to Providence and then to Ventura -- but which is finally taking me home to Boston.

When I came to Ventura it was as Worship Coordinator. I was asked to stay just long enough to "bury" the church, to hold services through the fall to the Christmas season and then close the church after the New Year. That was 1979. It is now May of 1980 and I have been here for nearly 20 months when I had intended to stay for three months.

During that time the church has grown from 7 active members to a thriving congregation of about 45 -- actually more members than that, but that many are active in the life of the church. Our budget is healthy. The pastor's salary has gone from $10.00 a week to over $300.00 a month. The church has an eager Board of Directors, 4 deacon candidates, an exhorter candidate, a music director and a wonderful choir. It also has a dedicated young worship coordinator who will be keeping things going until a new pastor is chosen. There are people available who would like to pastor at Ventura, because MCC Ventura is seen as a successful small church.

Ventura's MCC has an identity now. It is a church which is deeply rooted in solid Christian faith -- and speaks and sings that faith "inclusively." It is a young church -- most of our members are delightfully young both in age and in spirit. Yet it is a traditional church, enjoying and sharing the rich seasons of the Christian year, and finding worth and value in those traditions. It is a church where God is changing lives, and many of our members can and do testify to what the church has meant and done in their lives. It is a good church, with a loving, gentle disposition. It is a happy church and a caring church.

I do not want to leave this church -- and I do not leave because of any problem or difficulty here. I leave because God has called me to another task, probably more difficult than Ventura. I feel called not only to a church (although certainly to that church) but to a District. I feel the need to return to the Northeast to help provide leadership to a district which I see as needing an infusion of ministers from varying backgrounds to help provide balance. From my old Baptist background and my feminist leanings, I think I can help provide that balance. I also think I can help provide a maturity to help balance the youthfulness of that District, and possibly be of some help to the younger Worship Coordinators and Exhorters there from the years I have spent in and around churches.

I love Ventura. I love my congregation. I love the beautiful area in which we live. I will miss it all, and miss all of you. I know you will keep on working for God -- if I know you well, you cannot help yourselves, God has called you -- and you will keep on working for the liberation of all people. God love you all.

Rev. Marge

MCC CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR MAY

Sat. 5/9	7:30 pm	Robin Tyler concert, MCC-LA, 6th & Hill, LA
Sun. 5/11	5:00 pm	Choir rehearsal, MCC Ventura
	6:30 pm	Evening services, MCC Ventura, 4949 Foothill
Tues.5/12	12 noon	Rev. Ragona, VC Women's Center, "So You Think You're a Lesbian"
Wed. 5/13	7-10 pm	Helpline training session, 501 W. Channel Islands Blvd, #302, Pt. Hueneme
Fri. 5/15	8 pm	Holly Near Concert, Royce Hall, UCLA, LA
Sat. 5/16	8-12 pm	MCC Ventura dance, 4949 Foothill Road
Sun. 5/17	5 pm	Choir rehearsal, MCC Ventura
	6:30 pm	Evening services, MCC Ventura, 4949 Foothill Rd.
Tues.5/19	12 noon	Deacons' meeting, parsonage
Thurs5/21	7 pm	Helpling training session, 501 W. Channel Islands Blvd, #302, Pt. Hueneme
Fri. 5/22 thru Mon. 5/25		
		U.F.M.C.C. District Conference in Santa Ana
Sat. 5/23 thru Sun. 5/31		
		Gay and Lesbian Unity Week in Santa Barbara
Sat. 5/23	11:30 am	Kickoff Potluck/Picnic, Rocky Nook Pk, Santa Barbara
Sun. 5/24	1:30 pm	Watch Rev. Ragona on KEYT-TV "Focus", (Chan. 3)
	5:00 pm	Choir rehearsal, MCC Ventura
	6:30 pm	Memorial service for Gay Holocaust Victims of World War II, MCC Ventura, 4949 Foothill Road,
Mon. 5/25	8 pm	"An Evening at Borsodi's", Entertainment, Music, 938 Embarcadero del Norte, Isla Vista, $1
Tues.5/26	12 noon	Rally at UCSB Storke PLaza, keynote address by ACLU atty, Susan McGrievy
	12 noon	Deacons' meeting, parsonage
	8 pm	Films and discussions at GLRC, 1128 De La Vina, Santa Barbara (Addressing Alcoholism in the Gay & Lesbian community)
Wed. 5/27	7:30 pm	Community panel discussion, Westside Comm. Ctr, 423 E. Victoria St, S.B. (Achieving Gay rights in the 1980's)

Fri. 5/29	7:30 pm	Gay/Lesbian Memorial Day slide talk, Davis Recreation Ctr, 1232 De La Vina St., S.B. "Marching to the sound of a Different Drummer-Coming Out in WW II" by Allan Berube, S.F. and coffee and discussion afterwards at GLRC, 1128 De La Vina St., Santa Barbara
	9 pm	Gay & Lesbian dance, UCSB Cafe Interim, $2 donation
Sat. 5/30	10-2	Festival/Rally, De La Guerra Plaza, Santa Barbara, near City Hall. (Booths, Music, Mime, Speakers: including Rev. Ragona)
5/30	8:30 pm	Open House & Reception at GLRC, 1128 De La Vina, Santa Barbara, with special guest Midge Costanza, $3 donation
Sun. 5/31	4 pm	Concert, LA Gay Men's Chorus, Campbell Hall, UCSB, (Tickets $5/$4 from Mutual Ticket Agncy)
	5 pm	Choir rehearsal MCC Ventura
	6 pm	Reception for Chorus and community, Women's Center, free with chorus ticket stub, otherwise $1
	6:30 pm	Evening services, MCC Ventura, 4949 Foothill Road
	7:30 pm	Films "You are Not Alone" (gay) and "Susanna" (Lesbian) at Campbell Hall, UCSB, $1.50
Sun. 6/7	6:30	Last service at MCC Ventura for Rev. Ragona before leaving for MCC Boston

HELPLINE TO BECOME OPERATIONAL ON JUNE 1, 1981

According to Joe Cunningham, the Gay Helpline will become an reality soon. Training sessions have been planned and are included in the calendar of events in this newsletter. All volunteers are required to attend at least three meetings to be properly trained to assist on the helpline.

GAY/LESBIAN UNITY WEEK TO BE HELD IN SANTA BARBARA

Richard Campiglia, Executive Director of the Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, said that the week has been made possible through a special $3,500 matching grant to the Center from the Sunflower Foundation of Santa Barbara; interested individuals and organizations in the community are expected/needed to contribute the matching $3,500.

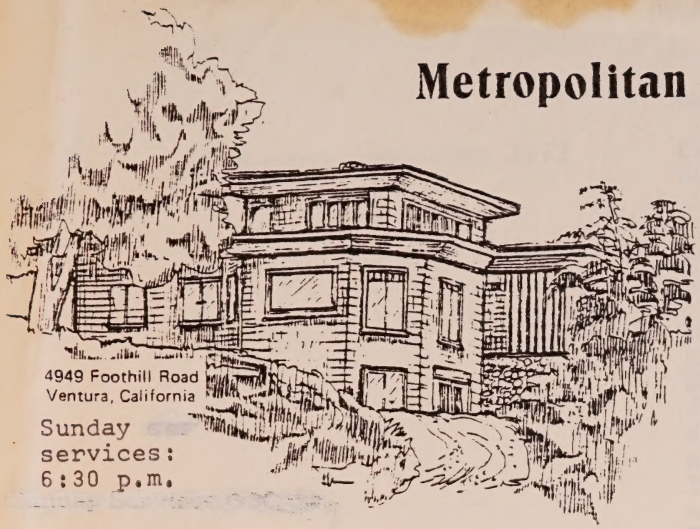
Donations--needed for the matching grant--should be directed to the Gay and Lesbian Resource Center and marked "Unity Week Fund." Volunteers wishing to participate by serving on task forces (Chorus, Film, Education, Festival/Rally, Media/Publicity) should phone 963-3636.

DISTRICT CONFERENCE TO BE HELD MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

The Santa Ana MCC, pastored by Rev. Rodger Harrison, will host the SouthWestern district conference as it celebrates its tenth anniversary. Santa Ana church members are offering their homes for MCCers as a welcome change to expensive hotel rooms. Registration forms are available either at the church following services or call the parsonage at 985-2594 for more information.

REV. RAGUNA TO APPEAR ON SANTA BARBARA TV PROGRAM

On May 6, Rev. Ragona was a member on a KEYT-TV program "Focus" which will air on Channel 3 on May 24 at 1:30 pm. She provided expert witness to both Gay/Lesbian activism as well as her Christian ministry.



4949 Foothill Road
Ventura, California

Sunday
services:
6:30 p.m.

Metropolitan Community Church

OF VENTURA

Rev. Marge Ragona, Pastor
Mailing Address:
Box A-O
Ventura, Ca. 93001
(805) 985-2594

MARCH 1, 1980

DEAR M.C. FRIENDS:

February has indeed been a busy month at M.C.C. Ventura. We soon enter the somber Lenten season filled with reminders of the suffering and death of Jesus. I feel that these reminders often lose sight of the fact that such deed are tangible proof of God's love. William Hordern, in his A Laymen's Guide to Protestant Theology, said, "Love in the Christian sense is a power rather than an emotion--the power that reunites that which has been separated. Love combines the sense of an absolute ought with the relativity necessary for particular situations. In every situation in which another person is involved, we ought to treat that person with love. . . .love expresses itself in terms of individual needs."

God's love is our unearned gift. We often say "God is Love" but do we relate such love to our own comprehensions? I think not! Love is many times divided into several aspects such as brotherly (sisterly) love=philos, or physical love=eros. I think God's love to be beyond such divisions. God's love is the culmination, the total expression of caring. My feeling of God's love is expressed by Wallace Stevens in the following:

FINAL SOLILOQUY OF THE INTERIOR PARAMOUR

Light the first light of evening, as in a room
In which we rest, and, for a small reason, think
The world imagined is the ultimate good.

This is therefore the intensest rendezvous.
It is in that thought that we collect ourselves,
Out of all the indifferences, into one thing:

Within a single thing, a single shawl
Wrapped tightly around us, since we are poor,
A light, a power, that which arranged the rendezvous.

Rev. Marge Ragona

September 1965-June 1973	Christian education director, Superintendent, Teacher First Baptist Church of New Orleans, Valence Street Baptist Church and Napoleon Avenue Baptist Church. These three churches are linked in a parent-children relationship. While a member at First Church, I was "farmed out" to both Valence Street and Napoleon Avenue to act as Director of Christian Education. I was Superintendent of 13 year olds (55 of them in 6 classes) at First Church, and had previously taught adult women, teens, and primaries.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

March 1980- Present	Medical Transcriber St. John's Medical Center Oxnard, California.
September 1979-March 1980	Medical Transcriber St. Vincent's Hospital Los Angeles, California
November 1976-August 1979 Full-time for two years, part-time for one year.	Medical Secretary, Surgery Dept. New England Medical Center Boston, Massachusetts
July 1973-September 1975	Medical Assistant Regency Medical Laboratory New York, New York
September 1966-June 1973	Teacher 5th and 6th Grades New Orleans Public School System New Orleans, Louisiana
1949-1966	Prior to 1966, I was a registered nurse at Tulane Medical School, various private physicians' offices, the Browne-McHardy Clinic, all in New Orleans, and the Mt. Sinai Hospital, Flower-Fifth Avenue Hospita Beth David Hospitals, in New York City.

MCC VENTURA
TREASURER'S REPORT FOR

1 SEPT. 1980 THRU 15 FEB. 1981

OPENING BALANCE	1 SEP. 1980 (CHECKING)		$ 103.51
	(SAVINGS)		132.86
		TOTAL BAL.	$ 236.37

RECEIPTS			
REGULAR OFFERING	$2,492.60		
BOOK TABLE	8.50		
SAVINGS	50.48		
NORTON SOUND "8" FUNDRAISER	319.74		
ART AUCTION	4,255.98		
CHRISTMAS DANCE FUNDRAISER	88.00		
VARIOUS CONTRIB. FOR PRISON MINISTRY, CUBAN REFUGEE'S, ETC.	85.00		
TOTAL RECEIPTS	$7,300.30		
LESS MONEY THAT WAS STOLEN	120.00		
	$7,180.30	TOTAL	$7,180.30
		SUB TOTAL	$7,416.67

EXPENSES	
PASTOR'S SALARY	$ 240.00
PASTOR'S GASOLINE EXPENSE	340.00
PASTOR'S HOUSING ALLOWANCE	300.00
PASTOR'S DISCRET. FUND	60.00
PASTOR'S INSURANCE	452.99
UFMCC TITHES (10%)	192.92
SOUTHWEST DIST. TITHES (3%)	57.88
TELEPHONE	219.48
PASTOR'S AND DELEGATE'S EXP. FOR DIST. CONF. (FOOD, REGIST., LODGING, AND TRANSP.)	238.05
PASTOR'S MOVING EXPENSES	63.00
PASTOR'S EXPENSES AND DELEG. FOR L.BEACH LAITY CONF, AND CUBAN REFUGEE DINNER	67.39
VISITING PASTOR'S SERVICES	80.00
UNITARIAN CHURCH (RENT)	252.00
UNITARIAN CHURCH (RENT FOR FUNDRAISERS ON 11/1/80, 11/15/80, 12/12/80, AND 2/21/81)	161.00
BEER AND WINE LIC. FOR (11/1/80, 12/12/80, AND 2/21/81)	33.00
NEWSLETTER (PRINTING)	51.02
NEWSLETTER AND ART AUCTION (POST. AND MAILING)	48.00
STAMPS (POSTAGE & MAIL.)	42.45
COMMUNION SUPPLIES	8.00
STATIONERY SUPPLIES	25.00
ACLU NORTON SOUND "8"	100.00
SANTA BARBARA GAY COMM. CENT.	100.00
UFMCC (IN-UNITY'S)	37.80
ANNUAL BULK MAIL. FEE #38	40.00
SUPPLIES FOR FUNDRAISERS, AND ART AUCTION	178.00
PRISON MINISTRY MAILING EXP.	60.00
COLLIER ART SOCIETY	3,781.78
SADDLE STAPLER AND STAPLES	45.37

CON'T ON PAGE TWO

SUB TOTAL $7,416.67

EXPENSES CON'T

TIM KELLEY GASOLINE EXP. TO PORHUE	$ 5.00	
TED TONEY FOR TRAVELING EXP. FROM L.A.	10.00	
REIMBURSEMENT FOR CHURCH CALLS ON TOM HALE'S PHONE	7.05	
TOTAL EXPENSES		7,297.18
CLOSING BALANCE 15 FEB. 1981		$ 119.49

CHECKING ACCOUNT	$ 56.22
SAVINGS ACCOUNT	63.27
	$119.49

UNPAID ACCOUNTS = PASTOR'S INSURANCE FOR FEB. $104.07

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED
Thomas M. Hale
THOMAS M. HALE
TREASURER AND MEMB. OF BOARD
OF DIRECTORS.

To: MCC Ventura board of directors

From: Jean S. Lawrence

Date: February 19, 1981

For a number of personal reasons I feel that it will be better for me and for MCC Ventura both that I hereby submit my resignation as Church Clerk of MCC Ventura. I hope, and intend, to maintain a close relationship with the church but I feel that I must turn over the responsibility of the clerkship to someone else. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

Sincerely, Jean S. Lawrence

Jean S. Lawrence

MCC VENTURA
TREASURER'S REPORT FOR

1 SEPT. 1980 THRU 15 FEB. 1981

OPENING BALANCE	1 SEP. 1980 (CHECKING)		$ 103.51
	(SAVINGS)		132.86
		TOTAL BAL.	$ 236.37

RECEIPTS			
REGULAR OFFERING	$2,492.60		
BOOK TABLE	8.50		
SAVINGS	50.48		
NORTON SOUND "8" FUNDRAISER	319.74		
ART AUCTION	4,255.98		
CHRISTMAS DANCE FUNDRAISER	88.00		
VARIOUS CONTRIB. FOR PRISON MINISTRY, CUBAN REFUGEE'S, ETC.	85.00		
TOTAL RECEIPTS	$7,300.30		
LESS MONEY THAT WAS STOLEN	120.00		
	$7,180.30	TOTAL	$7,180.30
	3,781.	SUB TOTAL	$7,416.67
	3,499		

EXPENSES	
PASTOR'S SALARY	$ 240.00
PASTOR'S GASOLINE EXPENSE	340.00
PASTOR'S HOUSING ALLOWANCE	300.00
PASTOR'S DISCRET. FUND	60.00
PASTOR'S INSURANCE	452.99
UFMCC TITHES (10%)	192.92
SOUTHWEST DIST. TITHES (3%)	57.88
TELEPHONE	219.48
PASTOR'S AND DELEGATE'S EXP. FOR DIST. CONF. (FOOD, REGIST., LODGING, AND TRANSP.)	238.05
PASTOR'S MOVING EXPENSES	63.00
PASTOR'S EXPENSES AND DELEG. FOR L.BEACH LAITY CONF, AND CUBAN REFUGEE DINNER	67.39
VISITING PASTOR'S SERVICES	80.00
UNITARIAN CHURCH (RENT)	252.00
UNITARIAN CHURCH (RENT FOR FUNDRAISERS ON 11/1/80, 11/15/80, 12/12/80, AND 2/21/81)	161.00
BEER AND WINE LIC. FOR (11/1/80, 12/12/80, AND 2/21/81)	33.00
NEWSLETTER (PRINTING)	51.02
NEWSLETTER AND ART AUCTION (POST. AND MAILING)	48.00
STAMPS (POSTAGE & MAIL.)	42.45
COMMUNION SUPPLIES	8.00
STATIONERY SUPPLIES	25.00
ACLU NORTON SOUND "8"	100.00
SANTA BARBARA GAY COMM. CENT.	100.00
UFMCC (IN=UNITY'S)	37.80
ANNUAL BULK MAIL. FEE #38	40.00
SUPPLIES FOR FUNDRAISERS, AND ART AUCTION	178.00
PRISON MINISTRY MAILING EXP.	60.00
COLLIER ART SOCIETY	3,781.78
SADDLE STAPLER AND STAPLES	45.37

4,255.98
3781.78
474.20

CONT'D ON PAGE TWO

SUB TOTAL $7,416.67

EXPENSES CON'T

TIM KELLEY GASOLINE EXP. TO PORHUE	$ 5.00	
TED TONEY FOR TRAVELING EXP. FROM L.A.	10.00	
REIMBURSEMENT FOR CHURCH CALLS ON TOM HALE'S PHONE	7.05	
TOTAL EXPENSES		7,297.18
CLOSING BALANCE 15 FEB. 1981		$ 119.49

CHECKING ACCOUNT $ 56.22
SAVINGS ACCOUNT 63.27 +100.00 - $163.27
$119.49

UNPAID ACCOUNTS = PASTOR'S INSURANCE FOR FEB. $104.07

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED
Thomas M. Hale
THOMAS M. HALE
TREASURER AND MEMB. OF BOARD
OF DIRECTORS.

Interface Community

a non-profit organization serving Ventura County
an equal opportunity employer

Dear Friends,

Have you found yourself in this situation? It's a busy day and a friend, neighbor, colleague or client approaches you for help. You want to assist them but you might not possess the skills or the time necessary to help them. You need immediate information that you can count on to help them to help themselves.

Fortunately Interface Community is announcing the availability of its 1981 Resource Directory. It provides comprehensive one-page summaries of over 200 Ventura County public and private agencies offering services from the AA to the YMCA. Information includes: address, telephone numbers, areas and persons served, appointment procedure and contact person, cost, bilingual capability and other important information you need to know when trying to help someone obtain the help they need or want.

The information is current so you can rely on it. The 1981 Resource Directory is indexed by services (adoption, alcoholism, counseling, drug abuses, etc...) alphabetically, and by Ventura County communities so you will be able to find the information you need quickly to save time and frustration.

And the price is reasonable, for only $13.00 you can purchase the 1981 Interface Resource Directory which has been expanded and improved this year. Bulk rates are available which saves you additional monies.

Whether you are a good citizen or a good neighbor organization that does not want to turn someone away empty handed, you will find the 1981 Interface Community Resource Directory the most comprehensive, current directory of resources available to youth and families in Ventura County.

SEND your order form below to: Interface Community
3475 Old Conejo Road, Suite C-5
Newbury Park, Calif. 91320

*Directories may be picked up at above address to save postage and handling.

Thank you for considering Interface's 1981 Resource Directory as a referral source for your home or organization.

Sincerely,

Linda Kovacs — Edward Heidig

Linda Kovacs
Program Director

Edward Heidig
Resource Coordinator

I would like to order_____ copy(s) of the 1981 RESOURCE DIRECTORY @ $13.00 per copy. Enclosed is _____. Bulk rate (5 or more) are $10.50 per copy. (Postage and handling $1.00 extra per copy.)

Name_____ Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

_____Check enclosed _____Bill me

United Way

3475 Old Conejo Road, Suite C-5 • Newbury Park, California 91320
telephone: (805) 498-6643 • 529-0975 • 647-7855

6-1-81

Dear Marge,

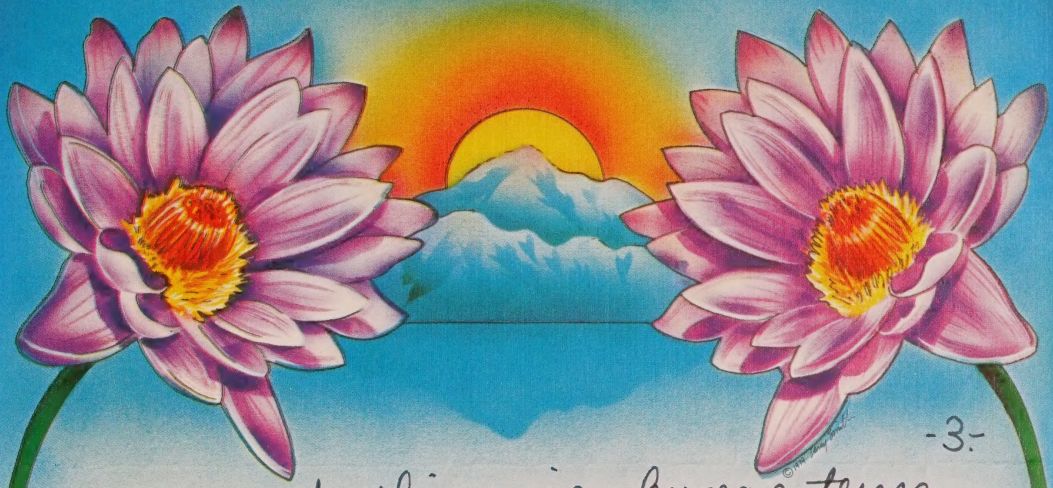
I have decided to write to you because I can express my good feelings better and come across clearer.

When I first started to come to M.C.C Ventura about 5 months ago I had a true and distinct emptiness inside, I had fallen away from the Catholic church because of the in-sensitive and cold way the mass was carried out and the churches overall attitude. When I became aware that I was gay I felt I was a sinful, evil, sick person.

But then I started to see →

Josef Cunningham and got all my self respect and attitude stuff taken care of. But alas there was still an empty feeling, a void inside. I really wanted to start going back to church and become closer to god. Well I found M.C.C. and with the great people and acceptance I found I decided to go back the next week. I really listened to what you said that next Sunday. (Oh. remember that you were the fist women minister I had ever been in contact with.) With your special way, and Clarity of voice and your friendly way of making me feel welcome and loved, and most of all by listening to your sermons I began to realize that the Lord does love me and ever since that realization I feel the Lords love growing inside filling that empty void.

My love for the Lord has increased infinitly. I also love the way you



can put things in human terms. I have also realized that in the 5 months I have been coming to M.C.C I have learned more about the bible and Jesus Christ then in 4 years of Parochial school and 2 years of Catholic child developement, for that marge I thank you. You have truly played an instrumental part in my religious re-birth ("born again" if you will.) I can honestly say that I admire and respect you more than any priest I have ever met or known. Well before you start your new endeava in Boston I felt that I really wanted to

over →

say this to you. You are a very special person in my life, and I wish for you and Sheila Love, happiness health and prosperity. Please know that my love and prayers go with you,

I have truly been blessed having known you,

Thank you,

Love,
Bill

P.S. I'am sorry our meeting last week was missed, I wanted to speak to you about becoming a member of M.C.C. Ventura, I know you will be extremely busy this coming week but if there would be any way we could get together for 15 minutes to a half hour to take care of the paperwork It would mean a great deal to me. If there is any possibility please call me, even collect, your a hard person to catch at home! Thank you,

1-644-8667

Bill!

MINUTES OF THE CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OF MCC VENTURA OCTOBER 12, 1980

The meeting convened at 5:09 pm with Rev. Marge Ragona presiding. Nick Vonteck opened with a prayer.

There are 41 members on the roll according to the Treasurer, Tom Hale. Of these 41, 10 to 12 are inactive.

Raddy Davis moved and Rosemary Fesler seconded that we investigate becoming a chartered church. The motion passed. Our current operating expenses were described as Pastor's salary $480, gas $220, Housing $600, discretionary $120.for a total of $1920 per year. This would have to triple for a full time salary.

It was suggested that the number of members present, number of visitors, offering, and $ required to charter be printed in the weekly bullitin to stimulate interest.

Marge pooposed to invite Rev. elder Nancy Wilson to work on project resurrection to help the church grow. Chan Ward so moved and Randy Davis seconded. The motion passed.

Tom Hale read the proposed budget for the new year. Raddy Davis moved and Sheila Rosecrans seconded that the budget be increased so that the pastor's salary should be $2700 instead of $1920. The amendment was passed and the new budget was rounded to a total of $6215.00.

An art show and auction was scheduled for November 15 as a fund raiser. Tom moved that we use home of the proceeds to buy a utility shed for storing the alter etc. Randy amended the motion to put 10% aside towards a permanent building fund. Rosemary seconded and the motion passed.

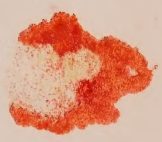
Nominations were made for delegates to the district conference in Tempe Arizona and the General Conference in Houston Texas. Sheila Rosecrans was elected. Two new board members, Chan Ward and Nick Vonteck were also elected.

Nick announced that 5 other MCC's were interested in forming a baseball league.

The meeting closed at 6:00 pm.

Jean S. Lawrence

Jean S. Lawrence
Church Clerk, MCC Ventura



Voice of the People

LETTERS

Responsibility 'Forgotten'

It is plainly shown in The Press-Courier that there are no bounds at which the news media will stop when it comes to unnatural thinking and the display in word or picture of these things. I am referring to the article on homosexuals printed Monday May 11.

If I have ever seen a "no news" item, this was it. For what purpose was this printed?

To inform? Don't we all know that there are (homosexuals) in society?

To shame the homosexual? It was evident they have no shame and love the attention given them.

To educate? There are an untold number of interesting things with which to educate men, women and children.

Why would a community leader such as this paper choose to display the unnatural before its readers? I think that by such exposure the (unnatural) becomes commonplace, and then instead of being tolerated it becomes accepted as normal.

Sex, if it is as God ordained it (husband and wife) or (unnatural) as this paper displayed wtih the article, should not be on public display — especially in a family newspaper.

Newspapers and reporters have a responsibility to their audiences that I believe they have forgotten. That is: not to dig in the trash cans for gutter garbage and sensationalism and the unnatural things. Enough of that emerges in everyday life to last us all.

If articles are to be done, make them constructive and helpful or beneficial to us all, instead of offensive.

B. Dickey
Oxnard

God 'Prohibits' Homosexuality

God, in his book of life, the Bible, clearly prohibits the homosexual lifestyle and relationship.

In the Old Testament, when the Levites came to engage in this kind of behavior, Jehovah God spoke to Moses and warned him that "for mankind to lie with mankind as with womankind was an abomination" and that they would be "vomited out" (destroyed) as all nations had been destroyed before them who had come to accept this kind of thinking. Leviticus 18:22-30.

He destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because all of the people there had come to condone it, along with other abuses of the flesh. He warns us in First Romans, 18-22, what will come to us soon if we do not reject this kind of thinking.

Repentance, not acceptance, is what he truly calls for. However, he also tells mankind that none has the right to judge these people but himself, for he shall be the sole and final judge. None will escape this judgment when they go "over the veil."

In other words, those who have come to physically harm the homosexual will be judged accordingly themselves and receive in turn, the same kind of punishment. He commands others to "pray for their conversion, not their destruction."

Incredibly, the National Council of Churches is in support of, and not conversion of, the homosexual lifestyle and is now in the process of rewriting the Bible in order to destroy all so-called "sexist bias" (against homosexuality). It wants to change God to suit man and not man to suit God!!

According to the Bible, these are signs of eminent "destruction of this system of things" and the second coming of Christ. He will surely display his wrath to the world soon for disobeying his l[illegible] in the days of [illegible] leading his [illegible] receiving the [illegible] ment of all.

Mrs. Mar[illegible]
Oxnard

'False Impression

Herman Engber
Chairman
Camarillo

Article Criticized

The prominently displayed article about the lesbian minister you published on May 11 was absolutely sickening. It could have been run one day earlier, on Mother's Day (with her holding an apple pie) and been in poorer taste.

I got the distinct impression that it was favorably slanted toward condoning and promoting homosexuality which, I feel, is an unnatural lifestyle. By holding a discussion on "So You Think You're a Lesbian" at Ventura College, this minister hopes to legitimize her sexual behavior and convert a few confused young people to her cause. God forbid!

She states that the day may come when two gays can legally marry. The next step could be a college (or high school?) class on how to make love, homosexual-style.

Thank God for the Republicans, whom she professes to despise for their opposition to the acceptance of homosexuality as "normal."

Name withheld
by request

Sound Off!

STATE LEGISLATURE

Sen. Omer L. Rains, D- Ventura, 18th Senatorial District. During legislative sessions: State Capitol Building, Room 5082, Sacramento, Calif. 95814. District office: 501 Poli St., Room 200, Ventura, Calif., 93001.

Assemblyman Charles R. Imbrecht, R-Ventura, 36th Assembly District. During legislative session: State Capitol Building, Sacramento, Calif. 95814. District office: 801 S. Victoria Ave., Room 202, Ventura, Calif. 93003.

CONGRESS

Rep. Robert J. Lagomarsino, R-Ventura, 19th Congressional District. During sessions: 2332 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. District office: 5740 Ralston Ave., Suite 101, Ventura, Calif. 93003.

Rep. Barry M. Goldwater Jr., R-Woodland Hills, 20th Congressional District. During sessions: 2240 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. District office: 266 N. Mobil Ave., Camarillo, Calif. 93010.

Sen. Alan Cranston, D-Calif. During sessions: 229 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. In the state: 10960 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90024.

Sen. S. I. Hayakawa, R-Calif. During sessions: 6221 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510.

'So Little Understanding'

In defense of the May 11 article concerning the church in Ventura for homosexuals: I personally find all the criticism by these narrow-minded bigots just as offensive as they found the article.

No mention was made regarding the reason they found it necessary to read every word of the article. The newspaper offers the same choice as TV — if it is of no interest or offensive, change channels or, in this case, don't read it.

I find news of rape and murders of little children sickening. I read enough to know it happened, but I do not have to read all the gory details.

Homosexuals have existed since time began. They are human beings, residents and taxpayers of our community. They deal with inflation, bear the burden of discrimination and have joys and hurts as we all do.

The only thing that sets them apart is who they choose to sleep with, and that is nobody's business but theirs!

I am delighted to learn there is a church they can attend to worship God and not be subjected to hostility by sitting next to these perfect Christians with so little understanding.

Mrs. Beverly Lucia
Oxnard

Commission Role Cited

...e proposed in ...gan supportive commission of both staff and the poor.

...t is a reality that federal ...will be cut. But we must